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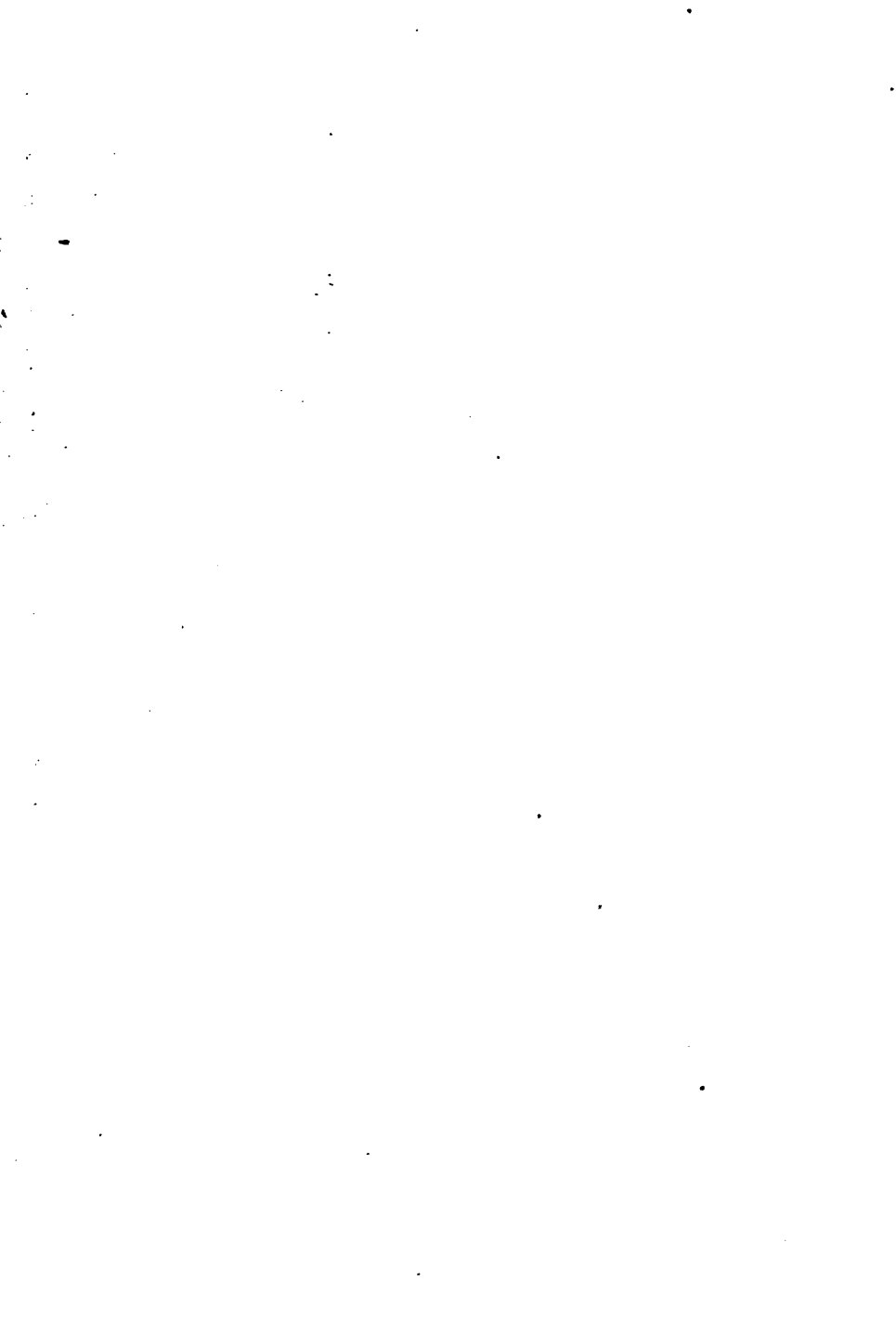
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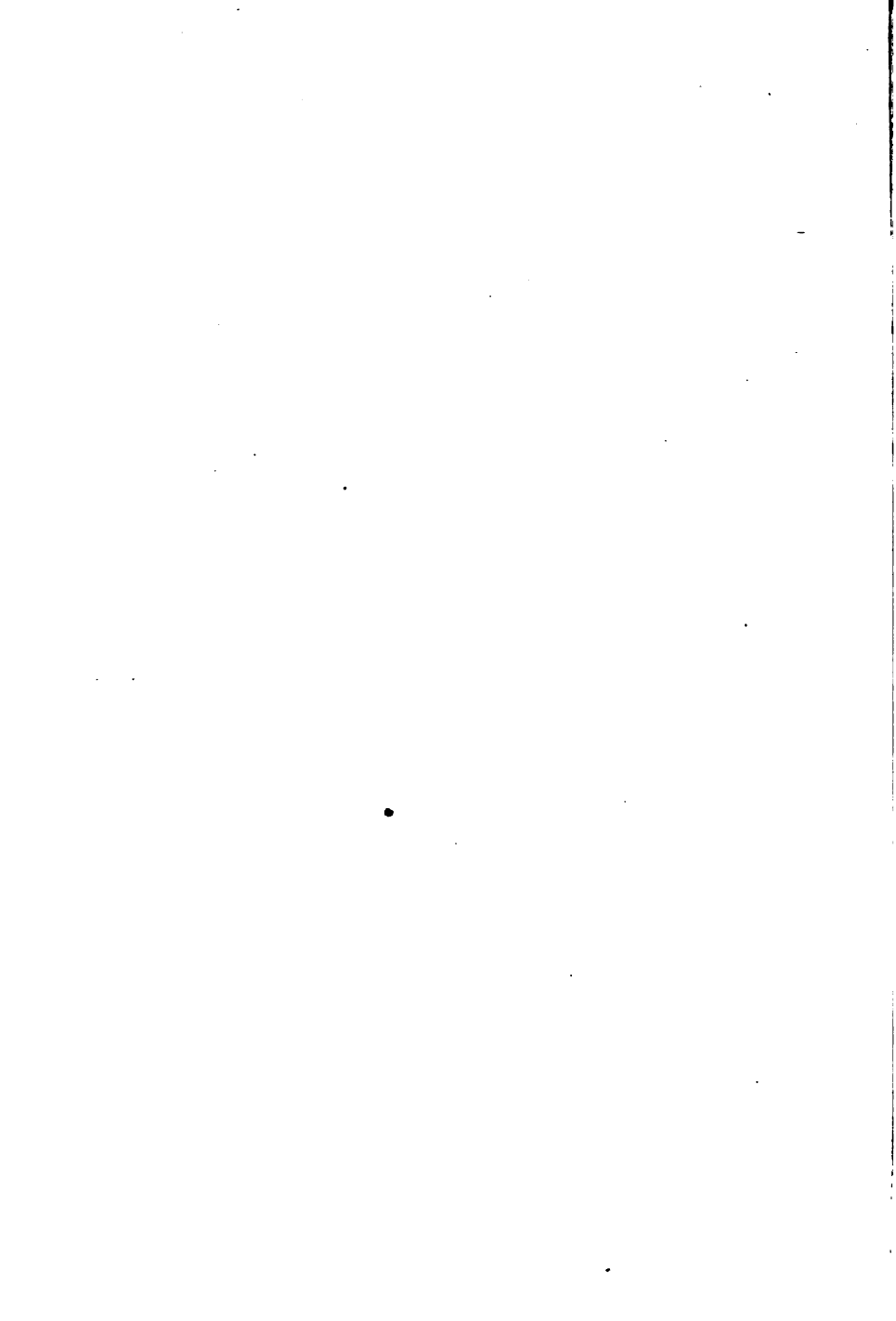
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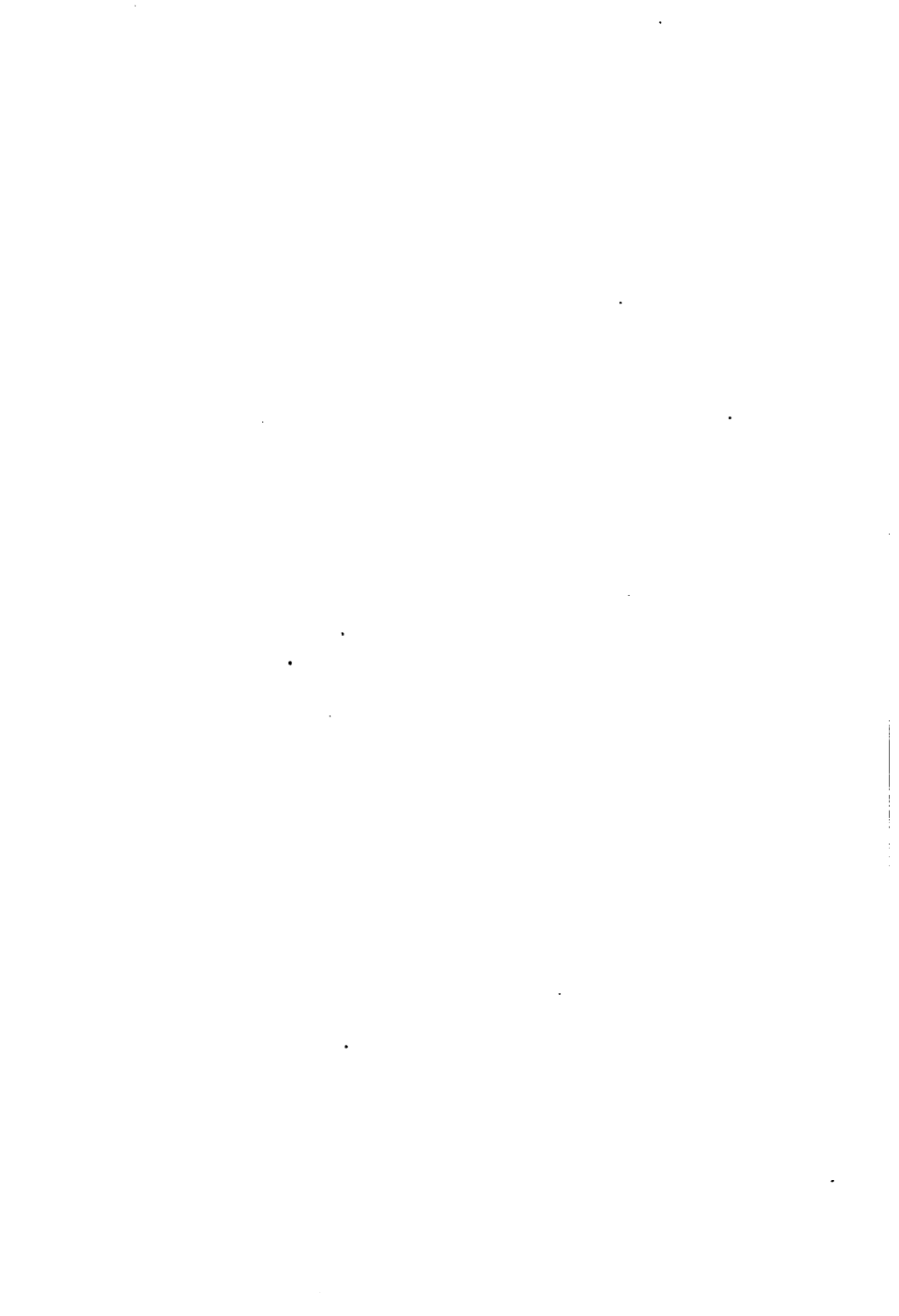
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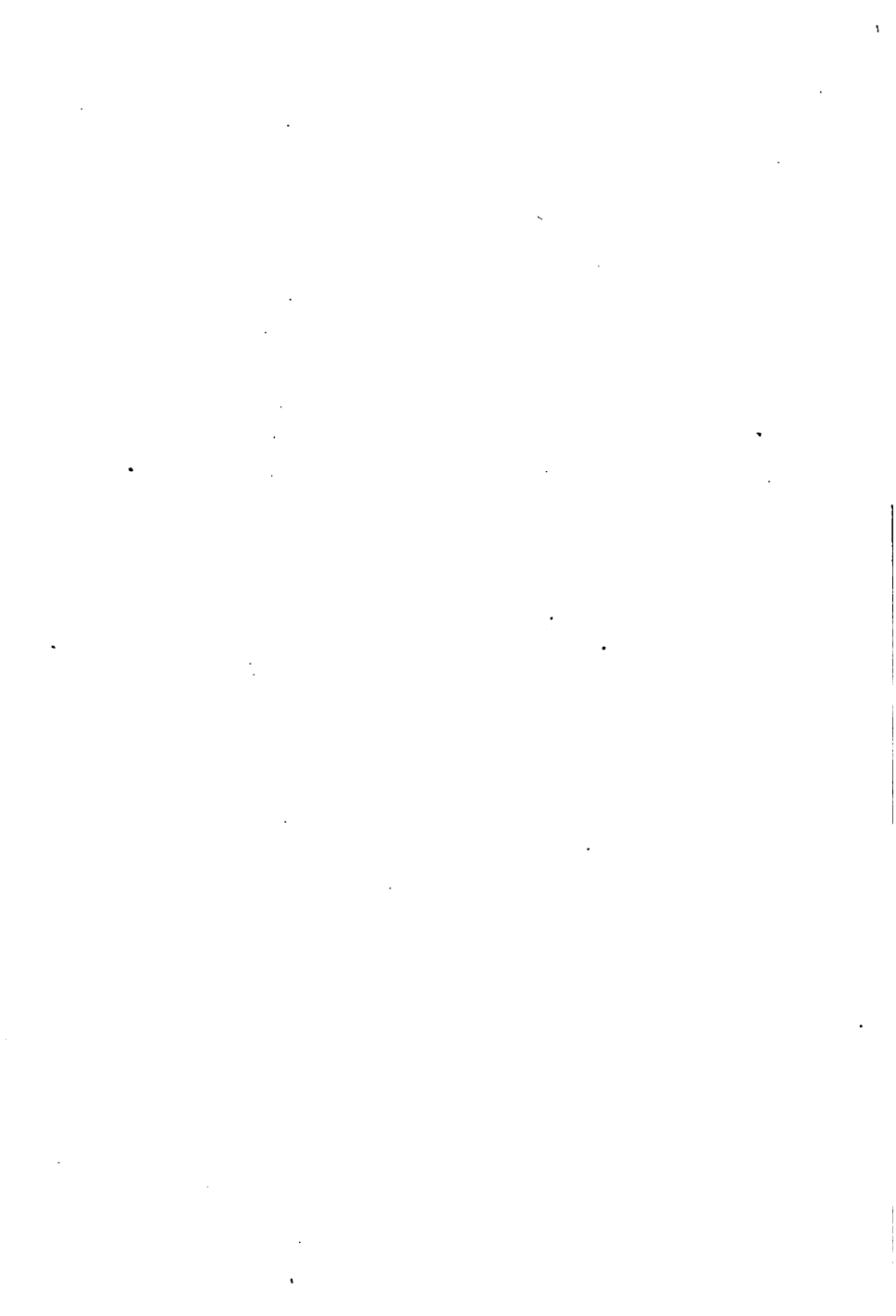


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BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

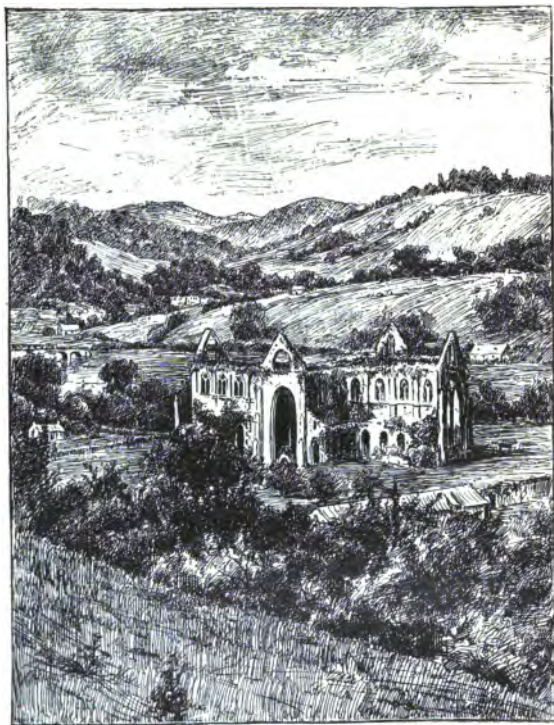
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NEW YORK





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ON SUNNY SHORES

BY
CLINTON SCOLLARD

With Illustrations by Margaret Landers Randolph

NEW YORK
CHARLES L. WEBSTER & COMPANY
1893

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Fine money ✓

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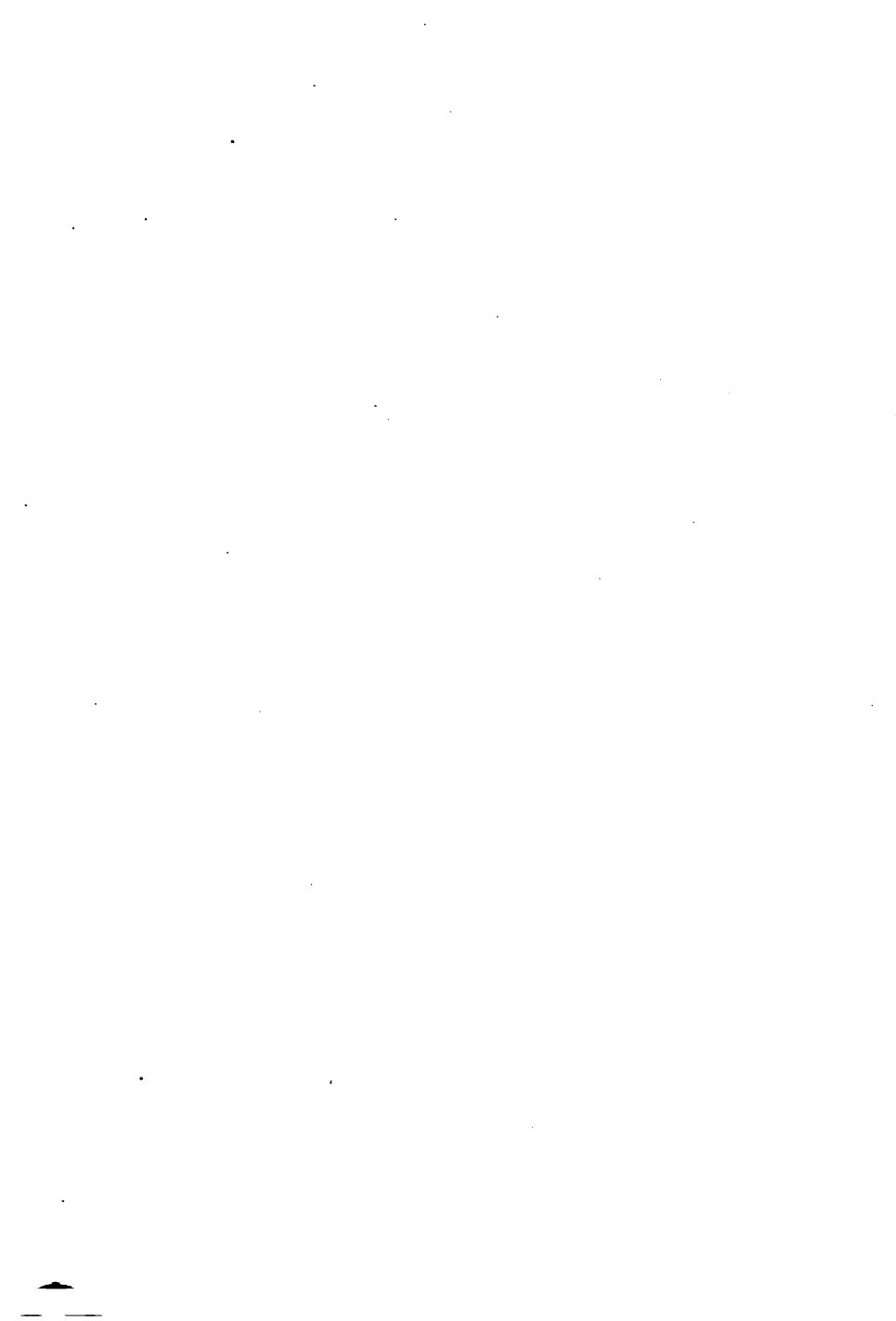
*Earth's sunniest shores lie not afar
By winding Wye or clear Pharpar,
But where the streams of home-land are.*

*And hitherward at last a spell
Will every wanderer's feet impel,
For here grows love's sweet asphodel.*



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Wanderings Down the Wye.



I.

WE descended upon Hereford one evening at full moon. "Boots," who welcomed us to the hospitality of the Green Dragon, had a lofty brow, and side whiskers that were carefully combed and curled. The streets were gay and inviting, in fact not to be resisted, so we sauntered out aimlessly, and soon came upon the cathedral, its roof and tower moon-gilded. The oaks and elms in the close were murmurous, the porches shadowy, and over all was the quiet charm of an unclouded night. Nor had the spell by any means vanished, when, on the following morning, as the last amen was being sung, we entered the

cathedral aisles, and seated ourselves until the white-robed choir-boys had passed out. The organist kept on playing as though in love with the music, and we walked through nave and transept to the swelling accompaniment.

One of the unusual features in Hereford Cathedral is a quaint fireplace in the southwest transept, the use of which is wholly a matter of conjecture. We were called upon to admire ugly tombs, we deplored the decorated roof with one of the vestrymen, and took particular delight in a desolate inclosure without the cathedral, where flowers grew undisturbed among time-dimmed memorial-slabs, sole mourners over the long-forgotten dead.

"Hereford Castle," saith an ancient record, "is one of the fairest in England." To-day, where this bulwark against Welsh foray stood, is a lawn known as Castle Green,—a pleasant promenade near the river. The Wye makes a wide bend at Hereford, and the old bridge that spans it shows, as does the cathedral, traces of the styles of many architectural periods.

II.

We embarked upon our cruise to Ross above the Hereford Bridge. Our boat was trim and our boatman a character. " 'Arry " he called himself, and to him be all honor as a navigator. He knew every shoal, every rapid, every pool in the stream. He was, withal, a weather-prophet (but what waterman is not ?), a boat-builder, a spinner of yarns, a rover. He believed in the goddess of fortune, and had no care for the morrow.

He would not lift his cap in honor of the Queen,—“ Dutch,” he said, with unmeasured contempt,—but his head was bare in reverence when he spoke of “ Prince Charlie.” We had deemed such memories buried, but here was a nineteenth-century Jacobite treasuring sacredly the old traditions.

When we started, 'Arry pulled a lazy oar. The day was too lovely for haste,—a soft breeze blowing from the south, the sky overcast, and not a film of haze to blur the distance. We dropped lei-

surely past the bridge and the cathedral, turned for a last look at the tower, saw a fragment of the town-wall King John built, had a glimpse of the ancient infirmary, and then our voyage had fairly begun. There were no shallows for some distance, and the willows on shore were perfectly reproduced in the stream. Tall stalks of an unfamiliar purple flower swayed by the water's edge. We cut through beds of the golden-hearted water-daisy, the long stems of which, outstretched by the current, gleamed in the light like wires of bronze.

Cattle stood knee-deep in the first shallows, and there were herds in adjoining meadows,—white-faced, wide-horned Herefords, for which the shire is noted. As we approached a river-inn, where we were to pause a few moments, 'Arry grew less garrulous. A stolid innkeeper brought us lemonade, and stood near lamenting the lack of rain while we drank. Then we put off again, lunching merrily, gazing dreamily, as we slipped by the verdant shores.

There was always a new vista to enthrall the vision. Now we saw a spire

peeping above the trees; now we descried a cottage bowered in shrubbery. Occasionally we had the wild excitement of running a rapid. Once we got



aground, stuck so tight that there was no way but for 'Arry to wade and pull the boat off, which he did like a true philosopher. By and by we paused under some alder boughs. Here our pilot picked up a rusty horseshoe and hung it on the side of the boat for good luck. At the same time he held forth to us upon some of his theories. That one should be blunt and straightforward was a pet notion with him. According

to his way of putting it, he'd not "peel eggs with anybody."

Not far from where the river skirts the wooded hills called Mordiford Tumps, we had a fleeting view of the old manor house of Holme Lacey, where Pope, the guest and friend of Viscount Scudamore, wooed the starched and stately eighteenth-century muse. As evening drew on we sought a tiny country inn removed from the river, and over a "piping" cup of tea, poured from a pewter tea-pot, made as merry as care-free voyagers might.

It was two hours to Ross—two hours of soft twilight and shadows that deepened almost imperceptibly. Just as we discerned the graceful spire that rises above the hill-side town, the moon broke through a cloud above it, and soon 'Arry's hail to a loitering waterman, told us that our voyage was at an end.

III.

EVERY Wye wanderer should make a pilgrimage to the grave of the "Man of Ross" in the stately old church, and to the site of his house in the quaint town market-place, where, upheld by time-eaten pillars, the market building stands. John Kyrle, the "Man of Ross," has a quiet resting-place, for not in all rural England is there a spot more consecrate to dreamless sleep than the Ross Church and the churchyard that surrounds it.

A sad-faced little woman admitted us to the sanctuary, and seemed proud of her office as guide. We were curious to see to what particular feature or object she would call our attention. Such people always have their hobbies. The lace-work adorning the figures on one of the Rudhall tombs proved to be her special admiration. This was so precious in her eyes we were sure if she thought something of like beauty would ornament her own burial stone her happiness would be complete. We paused to look at a

row of ancient houses in a lane leading downward from the church, and the sexton, digging and singing not far away, was the only human being our eyes rested on.

Below Ross the river plunges into hill country, and, whether the traveler goes by rail, high road, or boat, the picturesque will greet him. Here are castles, Goodrich and Wilton, and here are modest country-seats. It was at Goodrich, nearly one hundred years ago, that Wordsworth, upon one of his poetic pilgrimages, met the little girl who inspired him to write the poem that has sung itself into the hearts of all lovers of children.

The stream flows in great loops, forming several densely-wooded, precipitous peninsulas, or promontories. Beyond Symond's Yat, towering like a riven palisade, the Wye again traverses open country, and after a time receives the waters of the Monnow. On the tongue of land between the two rivers Monmouth is situated.

IV.

WHY did Gray speak of Monmouth as "the delight of the eye, and the very seat of pleasure?" We had this expression in mind when we left the Troy-Monmouth station, and took our way along a thoroughfare called Central Road, which we found occasion to re-christen "the Street of Smells." In vain did we seek for something to "delight the eye." We found naught even to interest until we came to the old gateway which stands upon the narrow bridge. We plodded up the wide main street in search of the castle, or what remains of it, and halted in front of the town-hall with the bristling figure of the hero of Agincourt looking down in menace from a niche in the second story. A tally-ho whirled by, a red-coated flunkey on the rear seat making the morning hideous with the blaring of a horn. The armored figure above seemed to grow a little more rigid, and in this threatening attitude we left it, to continue our search for the antique.

"Where is the castle?" demanded the inquisitor of an intelligent-looking little girl.

"I don't know, sir," was the bewildered reply.

"Shades of Harry of Monmouth!" we all cried, "and art thou thus forgotten! We fancied thy birthplace known to every toddling babe in the town of celebrated caps." But Monmouth caps are worn no more, and the name and fame of the doughty victor of Saint Crispin's day is rarely on the native tongue.

Small satisfaction we had when we finally found the remains of the castle. Monmouth possesses interesting associations, but little more. Here was born Geoffrey, the chronicler, whose study Monmouthians still make a pretense of showing, and near here, too, was the seat of the Herberts. When Gray visited it, the town must have been invested with a rural charm of which the last century has despoiled it, else would not that worthy poet, who appreciated so keenly the beauties of nature, have characterized it as "the very seat of pleasure."

V.

AMONG the many baronial strongholds which dotted that portion of England bordering on Wales, Raglan ranked as one of the most important, and its ruins to-day are comparatively impressive and romantic. Besieged and partially destroyed by General Fairfax in the great civil war, dismantled by order of Cromwell, it still retains much of its feudal grandeur of gateway, wall, and tower. From Raglan Village the castle is not visible. A dense oak grove conceals it from view until the visitor is quite close at hand. Approaching by the lodge entrance, beyond the grassy sweep of what was once the eastern court, one is confronted by three battlemented, pentagonal towers, ivy-draped, and showing in uncovered spots the devastating marks of war. But the glory of Raglan was, and is, the majestic keep, or Tower of Gwent. Although the Cromwellians mined and blew up a portion of this huge defense; the part that yet remains,



with the moat girdling it, tells how
grand, how impregnable it must have
been.

*Around the tall and turreted keep-tower
No ripple broke the water's dark repose;
As though to mark each languid summer hour,
Its dying petals dropped a pale wild rose.*

*We watched upon the mirror of the moat
The clear reflection one dim doorway made;
Half hid among the steely reeds, a boat
Lay keel-uplifted, broken and decayed.*

*And as in wide-eyed dreams we lay the while,
Where boughs inwoven made a leafy night,
There sailed around that lily-cinctured isle,
In silent loveliness, two swans snow-white.*

*In majesty they passed us, breast to breast,
Leaving a dimpling wake as on they bore;
Like wraiths that hastened on some spectral
quest,
They vanished swiftly, and were seen no
more.*

*Through all the years, as time swift-sandaled
flies,
Whene'er beneath green beechen boughs we
lie,
From out its moat great Raglan's tower will
rise,
And those majestic swans go sweeping by.*



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path upon the opposite bank that winds up through open field, thicket, and wood, to a rock pinnacle on the hill-summit known as the Devil's Pulpit. Local tradition reveals not why so sightly an outlook has so unfortunate an appellation. In the springtime the pathway is dotted with wild hyacinths, a fragrant mosaic of emerald and turquoise. Down-looking from the rock, with billowy mile on mile of country outspread panorama-like, it is to the abbey that the eye constantly reverts. If that is visible, no matter what the point of view, its magnetic influence is felt. Fountains and Furness Abbeys may be grander, yet it is to Tintern that the heart turns with the fondest recollection.

In the slowly-fading glow of early evening we started Chepstow-ward. Up, up, we climbed by the sinuous highway till we were far above the valley, the green of whose meadows and the silver of whose stream we had constant, although brief, glimpses of through rifts in the tangled woodland. Innumerable whispering sounds told us that the elves were abroad, for beneath the dense yew

shade, and in the matted beech and hazel copses, there was already a gloom like night.

Now we were just below Wyndcliffe, commanding leagues of view; now we had lost the river valley, and could see

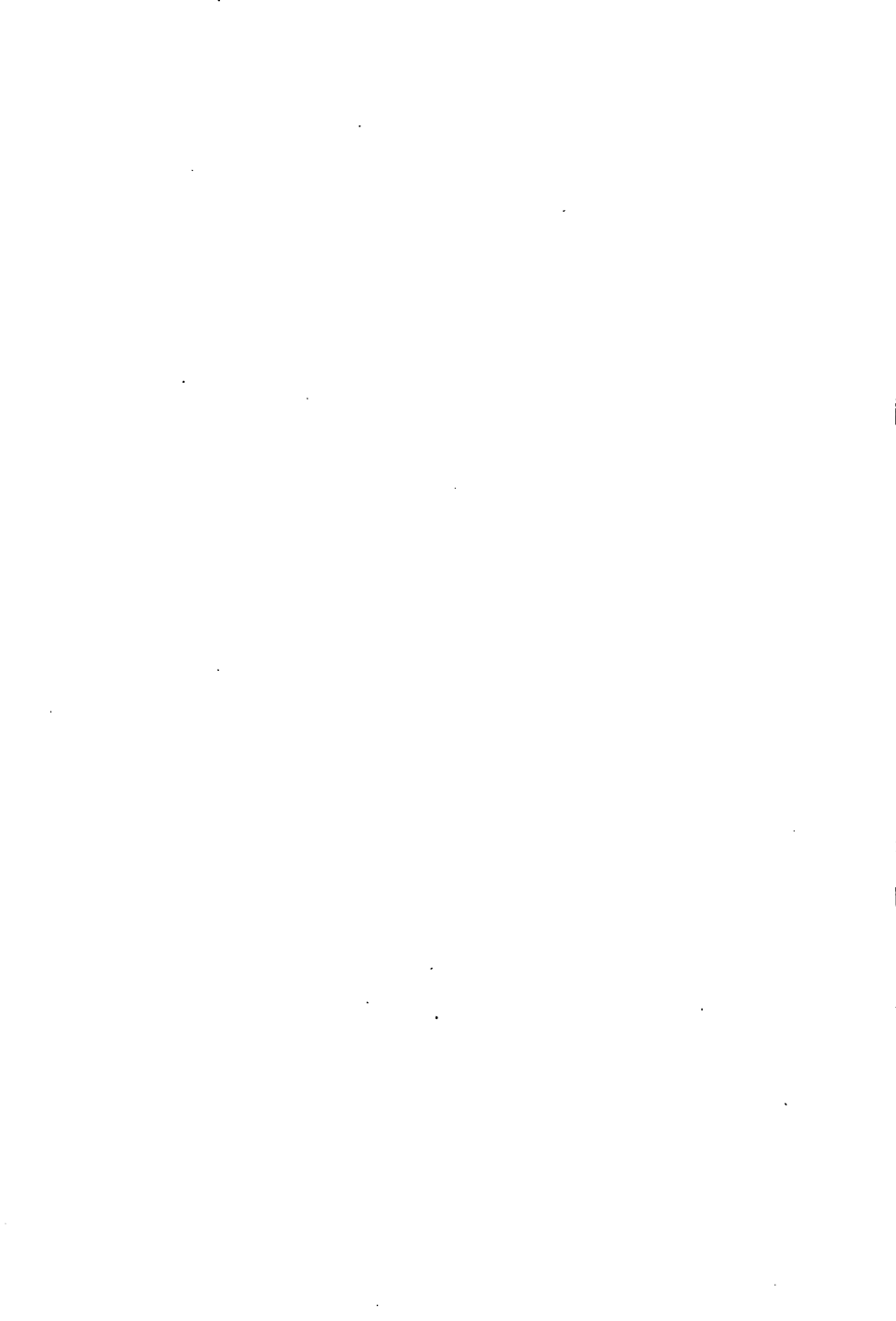


the gold of grain fields on the one hand, and the stately oaks of a park upon the other; now we were whirling through a nestling hamlet; and now, ere the first lamp of evening was lighted, we were dashing down a steep Chepstow street to the Beaufort Arms.

That night we looked for the last time

upon the Wye, standing by the portal of that castle which the archery-skilled Earl of Pembroke, Strongbow, once reared high above the stream. The in-running tide from the Severn was surging against the rocks. To it we flung our good-byes which were repeated to us, murmurous and musical. By the castle tower a melancholy wight was pacing up and down like a sentinel. The chimes in St. Mary's pealed, and we turned away.

From Haven Cottage, Ambleside.



FROM HAVEN COTTAGE, AMBLE-
SIDE.

I.

HAVEN COTTAGE stands on Rydal road. Each of its front windows has its little window-garden. The plot of ground



which the house faces is walled with brick, and bourgeons with roses, Welsh poppies, jasmine, phlox, and rhododendron. Mr. Coats tends his garden with as much care as his good wife does her

kitchen. Both their efforts merit high encomium. On one side of Haven Cottage ivy grows in a dense mass of clinging, climbing green. Peep from a window in the cozy first floor parlor—a tiny apartment – and, above the surrounding boughs of beech and oak, the huge shoulder of Wansfell thrusts itself.

Just at the edge of the town of Ambleside, and but a few steps from the gateway of Haven Cottage, a laneway leads across the fields to a stone arch spanning the crystal Rothay that comes gurgling down from Rydal Water and Grasmere. It is by this laneway I would have you go in the long, lovely twilight. The mowers are still busy in the fields, and the scent of hay is more grateful than any perfume of the Orient. On your left is the graceful gray spire of the church of Ambleside; on your right, half-hidden by trees, is the Knoll, where Harriet Martineau once lived. Fruit tempts you beyond garden-walls,—great plump gooseberries, and currants in opulent clusters.

A line of bending trees marks the winding course of the Rothay. How clear

the stream is, and with what happy runs and trills it seeks the bosom of Windermere! Beyond the bough-shaded bridge and an ivy-smothered lodge, a turn brings you upon the road you are to follow beneath Loughrig Fell. You will have the river near at hand the whole distance to ripple and laugh in your ear, and every bird's song will be in perfect harmony with the liquid music. The Fell rises, now gradually in a meadow that melts into a moorland, now sharply in a woodland that ends in a crag. It has symmetrical outlines; it is not so bold as Nab-Scar that fronts you sternly, nor so grand as Fairfield, hollowed like an emerald cup, and holding within this mighty depression the head waters of Rydal Beck that foam down past Rydal Mount and Hall. Beneath boughs that meet and mingle, past trim hedgerows and home-like villas, the highway winds. In one of the prettiest retreats dwelt Dr. Arnold of Rugby fame. The delicate wine-color of the wild foxglove-bell shows in many a nook; there are marguerites in the meadows, and the tiny whorl of the modest English daisy every-

where stars the sod. Little streams leap down the lower slopes of Loughrig and hurry by to the Rothay. There are rosy-cheeked country folk afoot and in carriages. The laurel leaves glisten; the pinky-purple blossoms of the rhododendron are falling; you are walking in shadow, while on the opposite side of the valley the sunlight still lingers.

What is it that you descry beyond an abrupt bend in the roadway? Well-worn stepping-stones in the dancing stream;—how fascinating! You stand upon them and look up and down the charming water vista. There could be no more perfect trysting-place for young love, and you glance about for the lovers. Ah! they have just gone, for there they are, approaching Pelter Bridge yonder!

*Beyond the stile a pathway leads
Through bloomy, gently-sloping meads
To where, with mellow tones,
From ferny glades and uplands green
Clear waters dimple down between
The well-worn stepping-stones.*

*What joy to leave the highway, white
With powdery dust and dazzling light,*

*And find this charmed nook!
Above, below, on either side,
Do loving boughs o'erlean the tide
As though to woo the brook.*

*Or old, or young, or maid, or man,—
Who crosses can but pause to scan,
So fair the vistas are;
What fitter place for love to tryst
When daytime's noisy winds are whist,
And shows the eve's first star?*

*While fleet and fickle seasons wheel,
If Fortune's gauntlet be of steel,
Or be a silken glove,
Whate'er the fiat framed by fate,
Still will the spot be consecrate
To beauty and to love.*



II.

I WOULD that you should go, friend, to Brathay Church some afternoon—perhaps on Sunday. Such, too, is the recommendation of Mr. Coats of Haven Cottage, and he speaks knowingly. You may pass, if you will, through Ambleside churchyard *en route*, and feel repaid for so doing. Again you will walk beneath Loughrig, but this time under that portion of it which fronts Windermere. There will be glimpses of the lake, and far reaches of hill and mountain. The hamlet of Clappersgate need not detain you. Beyond it is lovely shade on all sides, and the river Brathay darkling below the road. It is across this river that a narrow foot-bridge will guide you to the Church of Brathay, set on a knoll, and so encompassed by trees that only its tower is visible. Rest upon the steps that ascend to the entrance doorway in

the tower, and look up the river valley.
What a fair demesne it is, cradled be-
tween the mountains on whose sides the
lights of afternoon are growing purple!

*The rippling river runs below,
And day-long sings in treble clear;
The branches braided o'er it know
That soothing song through all the year.*

*Beneath the daisy-dotted sod
The hamlet dead lie slumbering,
But such a beauty broods abroad
That here death loses half its sting.*

III.

It is ten in the morning. The sky is a cloud-flecked blue. In front of the Queen's Hotel the Coniston coach is drawn up. "Boots" is bustling about, attending to the wants of Miss and Madame. Every seat in the tally-ho is filled. Now all is ready. The whip cracks, the horn sounds, and the horses plunge in the traces. You whirl through Clappersgate, leave Brathay Church on the left, and follow the river valley to Skelwith Bridge. Below, the stream deepens into a black pool; above, it makes foamy riot about mossy boulders. Soon the ascent begins. Pedestrians descend from the coach and tramp to the summit. Heather purples the higher slopes, and there are ferns everywhere. Wild thyme shows its tiny pink flower on wall-top and at the foot of hedgerow. In a grove of young larches the light that slants down the narrow wood-aisles

is a tender green that would defy the art of a painter.

The road reaches downward in wide loops. A beck brawls at one side, and foxglove-bells nod on its banks. Yewdale Crag rises boldly on the right. The meadows widen, and the lake breaks on the view. Yonder at last in full grandeur is the monarch of the range, the Coniston Old Man, bare, majestic, mighty of bulk, a veritable giant. Its sides are seamed and rent. Here a leaping waterfall gleams in imperishable silver; there a patch of heather purples softly for a day. Brown shades into gray; a deep cleft draws a line of black; then comes a cloud and veils in impenetrable white every rugged outline.

grand eastern window, the apex of which has crumbled away. With what a soaring effect those arches spring, and seem to hang poised in mid air, as though held by some magic power! You half expect to see them fade into the soft blue of the sky like a dream-fabric. Close the eyes but for a moment, and again the anthem ascends, rolls, peals; the incense breathes from the censer; and there is the rustle of robes and the low fall of sandals on the tessellated floor.

Cunning was the workman whose chisel shaped the chapter-house entrance, and the little cells for holy contemplation on either side. Here are decorated arches supported by clustered pillars, and within the chapter-house vestibule and the room itself, base, capital, panel, and boss, display rare skill of execution. Without were the large pillared cloisters, tile-paved of old, where the monks wandered during recreation hours. Everywhere the eye rests upon the footprints of decay, but how lovely a setting does the green of vine and moss and fern give to these destroying marks! The owl may hoot in the tower

by night, and the lichen eat into the stone above the abbot's tomb; the anthem of the wind may be the only one that rises from the choir, yet will there be devotees to worship at the abbey shrine, for the love of beauty cannot die, and here beauty has a perpetual abiding-place.

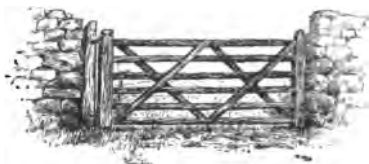
VI.

LODORE and Rydal have been sung, but there remain unchanted many silvery cascades in vale and on mountain-side, falls, some of them without a name, that day after day, a joy to the chance beholder, fling in air their lace-like loveliness. Gleaming now amid the breezy green of beech and plane-tree boughs, set now amid the deep emerald of fern and the brownish gray of lofty rock-slopes, catching now a fitful beam of sunlight, or wreathed in shifting veils of vapor, each has its own peculiar charm. And what a gay army of wild flowers troop up and down hill and mountain! They are a legion, and their banners are many-hued. The Scotch heather and thistle join with the Welsh poppy and English daisy, and mayhap a trained eye might spy the shamrock.

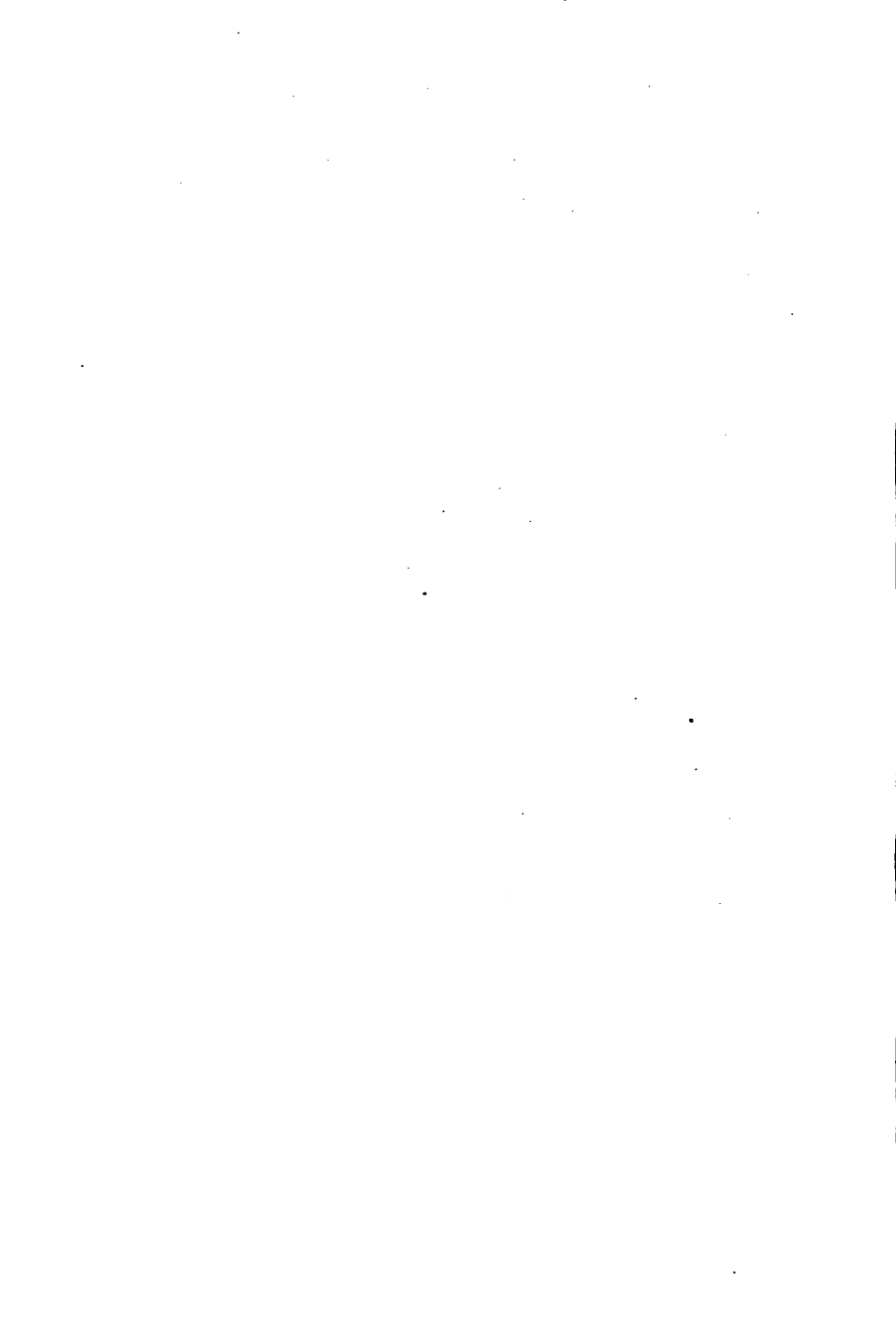
Have you a wish unfulfilled? Go then by the middle road over the mountain shoulder from Rydal to Grasmere, and hang upon the Wishing Gate! Built in-

to a high gray wall of stone, opening upon a downward-dipping stretch of pasture land, it unfolds a sudden panorama of waving tree-top and shimmering water, and reveals afar the village of Grasmere with its solitary church-tower.

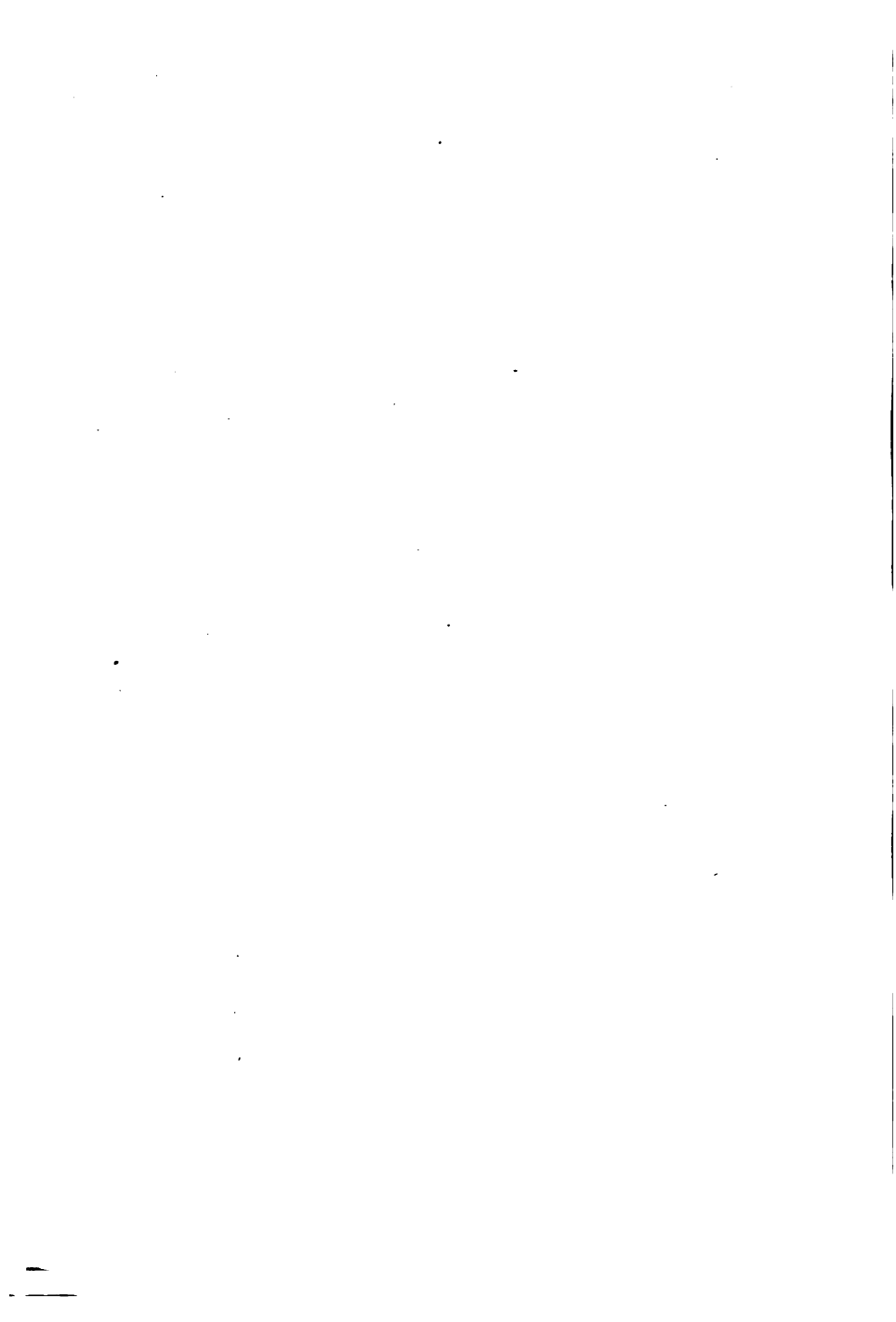
Cut both on wall and gate are the names of many wishers who have gone before; and whatever be the desires that you



in silence frame, surely among them will be one that you may come again to this beautiful lake-land, and explore its vale-retreats and mountain fastnesses from the kindly and cozy shelter of Haven Cottage.



An Isle of Wight Pilgrimage.



AN ISLE OF WIGHT PILGRIMAGE.

I.

ONE evening in late autumn, while sitting before a genial fire in a bachelor's London den, we declared our intention of setting forth upon an Isle of Wight pilgrimage on the morrow.

"Don't go!" cried the artist who was known among his familiars as "Pessim," though his kindly air gave the impression that he was a pronounced optimist.

"Don't go!" we echoed, "and why not?"

"Wait till leafy June," was the reply. "Take nature in her honeymoon attire, and not when she is about to don mourning."

"Don't mind Pessim," put in the bibliographer, whose guests we were. "He doesn't mean half he says. Surely, if you can't have your pudding with the plums, there is no reason why you should give up the pudding."

Nature's face on the morning of our

departure would have suited the mood of the most disconsolate of pessimists, but we were in no way disquieted. We would not allow so trifling a matter as a London fog to dampen our ardor. "When once we are in the country we shall find clear skies," we told ourselves. Alas! to what a test was our good-nature put! As we wheeled southward the mist grew denser. Then the rain began to fall, steadily, relentlessly. We saw the woods and downs of Surrey through leaden-gray vapors. There was not a single ray to light up the soft browns and glowing yellows of the autumn foliage. The pall had not lifted when we pulled into Portsmouth, and we had the Ryde steamer pretty much to ourselves. At the Ryde pier we raced through the rain to the railway station. After eight more dismal miles had been traversed we heard the welcome cry, "Shanklin!" and out we bundled into the same encompassing wet. The station-master cleared our mental atmosphere by confiding that he knew where some good lodgings could be found. So we breasted the elements and started

down Hope Road (propitious name!) toward the sea.

Half an hour later we were snugly settled. A crackling fire was burning in the grate, and tea was brewing. "Now let the floods descend!" we cried, and for a time there was such a weeping of skies and wailing of winds that the tiny garden-bower below our windows was a chaotic mingling of ragged boughs, tattered blossoms, and pool-dotted lawn. But just before twilight the heavens became penitent. Through the clouds shone vague glimpses of blue; we grew brave and strayed toward the shore. The storm had blown from the land, and the sea was but slightly disturbed. Upon the esplanade we met two or three mackintoshes strollers like ourselves. The tide was far out, and the sands stretched brown and clean below the sea-wall.

At the end of the esplanade we climbed to the summit of the cliff by a winding roadway, and loitered back to our abode, "The Laurels," along a path overlooking the sea. Not a ship was in sight upon the gray expanse. As we turned up Hope Road we were greeted by the

tumbled gold, green, and violet of an angry sunset, but a little later the moon broke through the wrack with the soft light of a peacemaker.

II.

THE next morning the sun rose out of the eastern sea, and made the dull haze golden, and glorified all the island downs. We could not tarry long within doors, for the birds in the hedges called to us, the fair rays beckoned, the whole world invited. Such a change as had come over the garden! The roses had lifted their heads; the scattered geraniums shone resplendent; the chrysanthemums were erect in all their bravery. Only the strewn yellow poplar leaves told of the storm that had passed.

At the lower end of Hope Road we struck into the path leading to Sandown along the edge of the cliff. The water was a sapphire mirror. Far out toward the horizon a few ships were dipping to the swell. The tide was at flood and fretted the base of the cliff one hundred feet below our bramble-fringed pathway. Culver's Down, thrusting its chalky head into the sea, glowed like a glacier in the full glare of the sun. Sandown, in its

wide crescent bay, seemed taking a morning nap.

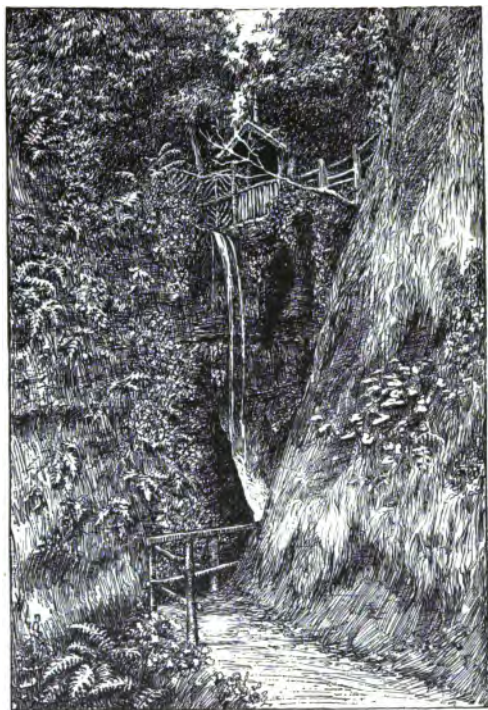
Though the year hung upon the verge of November, we plucked ripe blackberries from the hedgerows. The prickly furze showed its gay yellow bloom, mayweed flowered in the stubble fields, and laurestina bushes were in blossom in the environs of Sandown. In hollows where the wind did not nip the cheek the sun had all the warmth of spring.

Sandown lacks picturesqueness, and has little of the charm of Shanklin. Before turning inland to retrace our steps by the winding laneways, we followed with our eyes the line of the cliff along which we had come, and saw, beyond the town of our abiding-place, the promontory of Dunnose Head, a majestic bulk against the southern sky.

III.

LIFE at "The Laurels" was a quiet existence. The season was over, and the seaside sojourners had departed for town. The excursion coaches had ceased to run, and there were no fashionable promenaders on the esplanade. There was a novelty in straying about under these circumstances. We felt a sense of proprietorship in everything. The shopkeepers had an eager air when we sauntered past. We could survey from the roadway the various hotels, and make leisurely conjectures as to how comfortable they might be without exposing ourselves to the curious glances of a dozen or more peering eyes.

When we went to view the Chine we met but three people,—the admission takers at the upper and lower entrances, and a small boy who was diligently sweeping the leaves from the pathways. Shanklin Chine is a narrow ravine which has been cut in the sandy soil by a tiny stream that trickles through the cleft to



the sea. Both sides of the depression are densely wooded, and the path, which follows now one bank and now the other, is embowered from end to end by foliage through which the sun sends only stray arrows of light. Ivy grows in matted masses; mosses, ferns, and creepers of every description flourish in profusion.

Two miles almost directly west of Shanklin lie the "American Woods," and like good Americans we determined to visit them as soon as we heard of their existence.

"Why are they called the 'American Woods'?" we inquired of our landlady, who was as dimpled and round as one of her saffron butter-balls.

"Can't say, I'm sure," was the reply, "but they are mighty pretty woods all the same."

This sounded somewhat ironical, but our Miss Peck was as guiltless of irony as her carved sideboard which we particularly coveted.

We went twice astray—finding ourselves once in the heart of a brickyard—before we reached the forest of our desire. Alas! how were we then doomed

to disappointment! There were the inviting oak aisles with their beckoning ferns. We might easily have scaled the gate, but bold and black above it we read: "Trespassers will be prosecuted." He is a wise man who respects English law. A little later, however, came our triumph. We were still skirting the hillside grove when we discovered, temptingly near the highway, a large holly-tree laden with gleaming red berries. It was but the work of a moment to scale the intervening barrier and cut a goodly branch. Then on we marched, waving our trophy in token of victory. We had captured a flag.

IV.

WE went to Blackgang Chine with a coach and two. Our driver was as well groomed as his steeds, a Jehu whose top hat shone resplendent. The air had a frosty tang, but there was not a cloud lurking in any part of the heavens. Soon we were climbing Shanklin Down, and had sweeping retrospective views of gleaming sea, curving shore, and undulating country. The smoke rose in wreaths from the chimneys of Shanklin; then we lost sight of it all, and had for a new prospect a hill-bounded amphitheater where there were peaceful farms, grazing flocks, and, toward the coast, an indentation, with waving boughs above it, that marked Luccombe Chine. This scene was speedily left behind, and down loops of roadway, past thickening villas, beneath oaks and beeches and elms and planes, we plunged into quiet Bonchurch, and caught a fleeting glimpse of its tiny lake, its ancient house of prayer, and its bowery resting-place for the

dead. Then we were in Ventnor—busy, gay, sunny Ventnor—with its bright shops, its fashionable esplanade, and the great bare brown down in the background.

We clattered through the town, our driver evidently bent on making a display. We shaved the wheel of a vegetable cart, and escaped two other collisions narrowly. Pedestrians stopped and stared. There were wondering faces in the shop windows, and so we left astonished Ventnor to recover from its shock, and wheeled leisurely along that most delightful of drives, the Undercliff. Here there is a revel for the eye,—tumbled, jagged rocks that mosses and vines half hide; dense woodland where the lights shade from gold through green into cavernous black; lawns where Flora is garlanded with blossoms the year round; seascapes that are as varied and changing as the hues of the chameleon; and, ever impending, the dull white cliffs, a splendid foil for so rich a carnival of color.

It was noon when we drew up in front of the hotel at Blackgang Chine, and we



welcomed an opportunity for stretching and warming our cramped and numbed limbs. We loitered through a bazar at the Chine entrance, and then began clambering down the wooden steps and steep pathways that lead through the bare, bleak rent in the cliff to the sea. Long before we saw the beach we could hear the hoarse murmur of the waves. After a time we gained a sunny platform, one hundred feet above the shore, that revealed the gloomy grandeur of the scene below, and showed as well the wildness of the overhanging down. Though furze and frost-nipped heather were visible in hollows, the prevailing tone was a depressing gray to which distance gave the effect of black. The soil, where exposed, was almost sooty in appearance; dark boulders dotted the beach, on which the billows foamed, receding with a treacherous undertow. Despite the clear sky and the expanse of smiling sea, there swept before our eyes a vision of storm-clouds piled bank on bank, of waves tossed and shivered into spray by tempestuous winds, and of ships driven helplessly on this fatal shore.

The spirit that haunts the spot is that of
threatening calamity.

*A seamed and jagged precipice that towers
Sheer in the ever-palpitating air;
The face of nature stern as in despair,
Gladdened by naught that with its brightness
dowers.
Above, a changeful sky that glooms and lowers,
Or seems to mock if its expanse be fair;
The flight of wheeling gulls. Below, a bare
And treacherous beach, where breaks the spray
in showers.*

*And wide, a gray-green, undulating floor,
Dotted with sails that sweep to ports unknown,
Bounded by voids that touch infinity;
And rising, rolling, swelling evermore,
Sublime in all its thunderous monotone,
The surge of the insatiable sea.*

V.

It was cheerful to turn our faces from the ocean and its fickle moods, and ride northward between hedgerows that had not yet lost their leaves toward historic Carisbrooke. We had a sidelong view of the Church of Chale with its perpendicular tower, beneath the shadow of which sleep eighteen shipwrecked souls who perished when the stanch ship *Clarendon* went down half a century ago. Behind us reared St. Catherine's Hill, on the crest of which, hundreds of years since, ascetic spirits sought a hermitage. We plunged through deep lanes; we whirled along ridges above wide farms. A guide-post revealed to us that we were not far from Carisbrooke, then gray battlements, above which waved ambered boughs, told us that we were there. But this first glimpse was a rear view. We must, perforce, follow the highway and cut a wide sweep into the valley and town before we could reach the castle gate.

As we crossed the foot-bridge, spanning a clear stream at the base of the castle hill, we encountered a pleasant-faced old man who accosted us, and asked if we were going to the castle. Receiving an



affirmative reply, he remarked that he, too,

was bent in that direction and would show us the shortest path. Our guide had worked about the ruin "nigh onto forty year," as he put it ; and, though it afterward appeared that he had been lying in wait for us, we were heartily glad of his company, for, like King Cole, he was "a merry old soul," and a workable mine of information.

Climbing through a beech grove we ascended the girdle of earthworks. These are flanked by the moat and the ancient wall. Passing toward the gateway we had the town below on our right, its Norman-spired church rising conspicuously above the other buildings. To the north was the broad Parkhurst Forest, and, when we scaled the ramparts, we could discern the roofs of Newport and the towers of Osborne. As we approached the entrance a man came flying toward us with long leaps. "Is he mad?" we queried. Furious because we would not purchase his photographs, he indeed proved to be. We had to run the gantlet twice after triumphing over this first outpost, and took the castle, as it were, by storm.

A melancholy interest attaches to this relic of old time on account of the imprisonment here of Charles I., and the death of his daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, of whose loving devotion, tenderness, and piety many touching stories are told. We wandered through the rooms these royal unfortunates occupied, age garrulous the while with anecdote

and comment, and found ourselves, as often happens when in such spots under quieting influences, living in the troublous times of the past, and reviewing the changed scene with curious eyes. The white-washed, tourist-bescribbled walls became tapestry covered; fire-dogs stood in the vacant fireplaces; the empty windows again held bars and translucent strips of horn; while without, in the court, was the clanking of armor and the tramp of marching men.

We made a circuit of the castle by a path upon the summit of the wall. The chapel is a roofless ruin, and the burial-ground that once adjoined it is a vegetable garden. The bowling-green, where the soldiers formerly took their recreation, affords a fine tennis-court for modern-day men of peace. Not the least interesting of Carisbrooke curiosities is a seven-hundred-year-



old well of great depth. It is covered by a spacious shelter, and water is drawn by means of a wheel, sixteen feet in circumference, which a patient donkey works treadmill fashion. "Jack" is a knowing fellow. He stands sleepily by till the empty bucket has been lowered, never offering to begin his task till the required moment. Then he goes about it with a persistent energy. Down he steps, however, the instant the dripping vessel reaches the level of the well-curb, and pokes his head over the bar which holds him within bounds for the reward which the kindness of many visitors has caused him to expect. •

We tarried for a moment at the window from which, it is said, King Charles attempted to escape. His plan was revealed by one of the soldiers who was in the secret, and afterward, when we went into the old churchyard in the town, our patriarchal guide called our attention to the sunken and defaced tombstone of one, William Rudy, "murdered for betraying his king."

A chilly dampness had crept into the

lanes by the time we left Carisbrooke, and before we caught a glimpse of "The Laurels" the sun had sunk, blear and red, in a bank of purplish vapor, while over all the lowlands white mists were floating like veils of lawn.

A Tramp Down the Neckar.

A TRAMP DOWN THE NECKAR.

IN Heidelberg, on the last Sunday in August, they celebrated the anniversary of the victory of Sedan. Flags flapped in the breeze, bands played, processions formed and marched, the national colors appeared in every patriotic button-hole, the castle was profusely decorated, and



one of the great tuns was emptied by the merry-making bands. Far into the night songs rang in the streets that were dimly lighted by flaring gas and cloudy moonbeams. September came, wearing matronly gray. When we stepped from the train at Neckarsteinach, a chill wind, blowing down the val-

ley of the river, gave us a rude greeting. The noses of the railway officials looked nipped. The dark walls and roofs of hill-perched Dilsberg, showing here and there a shading of red, alone had a light background. Behind them was a spectral whiteness in the heaven, against which the solitary church spire was sharply penciled. On the hill-slope toward Neckarsteinach we could see the marble crosses in the churchyard.

By a substantial, gracefully-arched bridge we crossed a tributary of the Neckar, and found ourselves in the heart of the old robber town, with two castles towering above us. Three hatless hags, croaking upon the sidewalk, called to our minds the witch-wives of yore, and a beetling-browed man, glowering from a shop-window, had the menacing air of a veritable mediæval cutthroat. From many of the high gable windows huge feather quilts were hanging for a morning airing, but, notwithstanding, the village had all the appearance of dreamless repose.

We discovered a narrow laneway leading castleward, and entered it boldly.

As we wound upward there was no sign of life. The worthy baron who has repaired the towers and walls of Steinach was not abroad, nor were any of his men or women in waiting. We left his modernized hallways behind, and followed a woodland path along the mountain spur. Toward the Neckar on one side, and toward its tributary on the other, there was an abrupt descent through dark aisles of spruce. A train rushed screaming through a tunnel beneath the spur.

We came on the tree-grown ruins of Hinturberg suddenly. Of all its battlements the central tower only remains. For banners, a clump of firs wave bravely from its summit. At the time of our visit the remnants of the castle were in the temporary possession of an artist, who had pitched his stool in an open spot, and was transferring the fragments of the shattered robber stronghold to his canvas. We left him sole lord of the domain, and wandered along the mountain brow above the Neckar. The panorama was a constantly varying one. The wide curve of the river, the

three castle-towers above the adjacent woodland, the road-divided mountain slopes in the background, the clustered roofs of Neckarsteinach below, grim Dilsberg opposite, the white sinuous ribbon of highway on the river bank,—all appeared in ever-changing effect. Smoke rose in thin wreaths, and was soon lost in air. Two cows attached to a hay-cart plodded phlegmatically along the distant highway. In the woodland a jay screamed with lusty throat.

The lofty eyrie of the Swallow's Nest commanded a still more extended view. This castle could not have been given a more appropriate name. We sat on the small inclosed terrace below its double towers, in the very seats used by the robber barons and their retainers, when watching the approach of their foes along the valley, or when resting at the close of the day after some desperate raid or foray. From the face of the cliff beneath workmen were quarrying stone, and the sound of their implements aroused vague echoes.

A steam-wherry came puffing down the river with quite as unmusical a sound

as that made by a snoring German at the Heidelberg hotel during the small hours of the previous night. We marked the craft wheeze its rapid way around a bend in the stream, and followed its course by ear long after it had disappeared from view. Heather in pink profusion of bloom grew everywhere in the forest, and we plucked great sprays of it as we swung down from the dizzy height of the Swallow's Nest.

Descending by sharp zigzags, we soon gained the highway below Hinturberg, and with the river and railway on our left, and the quarried mountain on our right, began our tramp down the valley. Every time we turned for a retrospective view, Dilsberg obtruded itself.

Around the walls of this summit fortress Tilly stormed in vain during the thirty years' war. In its church are buried many of the Steinach barons, to whom the four castles on the opposite side of the vale once belonged. With pious inscriptions above them, and suppliant figures upon their tombs, they sleep, although during their lives they were anything but pious or suppliant.

With them it was plunder and strife by day, and dreams of the same wild pleasure by night. If they have reached a bourne of peace, existence there must be novel to them, though possibly by this time they have become accustomed to it, since the last of them died more than two centuries ago.

Between pear, plum, and apple orchards our pathway led us. In an occasional lane were tangled blackberry vines. The yellow and purple flowers of late summer fringed the road. Peasants with weather-bronzed faces gave us not so much as a questioning look. Hard toil had killed curiosity. There were hatless women and coarse-bloused, thick-booted men. Both men and women were busy in many fields, harvesting the scanty crop of hay. The mowers seemed to labor without zest, but those who wielded the rake showed vigor,—these were the women.

When we crossed the Neckar by the road and railway bridge and entered Neckargemünd, Dilsberg still loomed boldly against the sky. The cool air of the morning had sharpened our appe-

tites, and we were on the lookout for an inviting inn, where we could lunch after the fashion of the country. We were about giving up our search in despair, when unexpectedly and luckily we discovered the Gasthaus Pfalz. A glimpse through a rugged archway of a shrub-set terrace allured us. We entered without ceremony, and secured the choicest nook. A black-coated "kellner" appeared, and speedily set about fulfilling our desires. In the meanwhile we feasted our vision on the beauties of the landscape. There was Dilsberg, still glooming from its eminence; there was the river eddying, surging by, thirty feet beneath us; there were the fresh meadows and orchards beyond; and below was a unique contrivance in the way of a ferry that puzzled and interested us for a long time. It struck us as being largely a local invention, but we afterward saw several constructed from a similar model.

Given a boat, flat-bottomed, wide, strong, a rope passing across it through a groove, and stretching from bank to bank, also another rope or wire reach-

ing from the center of the large boat to a smaller one further up the stream, and thence to a series of logs, at intervals of perhaps twenty feet from each other, then a windlass to draw taut the second rope, and you have all the appliances.

The post of ferryman was a sinecure. The possessor of it gave the windlass a few turns, his pipe a few puffs, the current did the rest for the boat, and as for his pipe, it seemed to smoke as easily as Vesuvius.

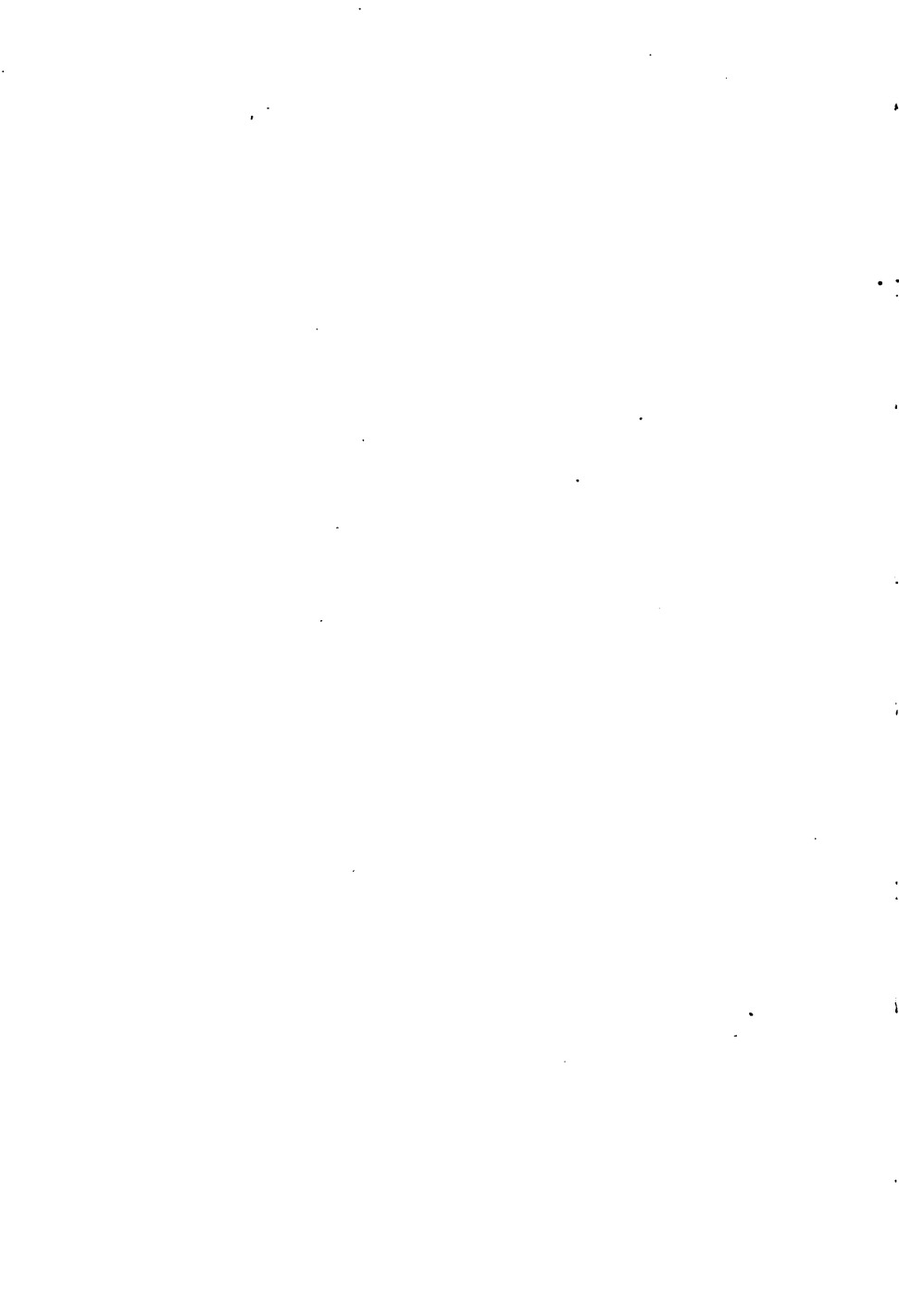
The ferry was fascinating, but we shortly transferred our attention to what the spry "kellner" spread before us, for there were several miles yet to



compass. We shared the road with a fellow pedestrian for some distance after leaving Neckargemünd, and bade adieu to him and to Dilsberg at the same time. We think of Dilsberg as still towering, and of him as still plodding, though doubtless by this time he has reached his German Mecca.



Tarrying in the Tyrol.





THOSE Tyrol travelers, and they are in the vast majority, who pass Feldkirch, pausing only for a hasty luncheon at the railway station, know not what they miss. When we decided to break our journey at this once strongly fortified mountain town, it was with the intention of remaining but one night. Rumor led us to believe that we could be comfortable at an inn known as the *Englischer Hof*, so when the train pulled into the station, and we had extricated ourselves from the throng of passengers

scrambling for the luncheon-counter, we looked about expectantly for the porter of our chosen hotel. Vainly we cast our eyes over the shouting, rushing crowd. No large-capped tourist-seeker crossed our angle of vision. The exit gateway was unguarded, and we left the station. Without, stood a bright box of an omnibus, and a sturdy horse blinking in the afternoon sun,—but still no porter. We piled our possessions into the interior of the vehicle, seated ourselves upon the comfortable cushions, and waited. At last he came, the smiling, bowing hotel functionary, and away we dashed down a short lane to the highroad.

We saw pleasant villas as we whirled along, laden fruit trees, and a profusion of summer flowers. The highway was hard and white. We turned twice abruptly, and found ourselves at the hotel, just at the edge of the town. The entrance was beneath a massive white-washed arcade. The exterior of the building had a worn and weather-beaten appearance, but there was a bright shop in one corner which was reassuring.

The landlord came running down the mat-covered stairway, and greeted us with much rubbing of his hands.

Oh! yes, we could have a room. Certainly! From his air we concluded that the whole hotel was at our disposal, as, in fact, it afterwards proved to be. We mounted a wide flight of stairs, and on the first landing caught a glimpse of a table laid with spotless linen.

"Encouraging!" we thought. Near the top of the second stairway was the entrance to our apartment. We were overcome at first by its spaciousness. Then we were conscious of a huge porcelain stove in one corner which brought to mind the leaning tower of Pisa, and of a colossal mirror in which our figures assumed an unnatural rotundity. We glanced at the five deep windows, and realized that we should have the sun all day. We looked at our landlord; he beamed with pride, and well he might, for everything was as "neat as wax."

How royally we dined that night, sole monarchs of the long, pleasant, cheery dining-room! Our host served us with his own hands, bringing in dish after

steaming dish, tempting and savory. Many a time since have we, in recollection, eaten through the epicurean courses of that first Feldkirch feast.

II.

OUR room looked upon three thoroughfares. One was christened *Neustadt*, one the *Kirchen Platz*, and one the *Schmid Gasse*, after some gentleman of the worthy and far-scattered Smith family. We soon discovered that the streets of Feldkirch were called *gasse*, and not *strasse*, and also that they were as crooked as cowpaths. On the *Markt Gasse*, and other main highways the great peaked and gabled buildings were arcaded. Upon these arcades the shops opened. Here we found the atmosphere, save at midday, chilly and damp, while odors suggestive of an unburied past breathed from dark doorways and alleys. The center of the street, though possibly not the most fashionable promenade, proved to us the most attractive.

A massiveness, as well as a quaintness, characterizes the architecture in the old portion of the town. The suburbs are modern, yet in the surrounding country there is no sign of a new régime in the

manner of building. On our first round of inspection we discovered that the tourist was a curiosity, and came to the true conclusion that Feldkirch was unspoiled. Most of the women we met were bareheaded. The men were idle,



many of them smoking white-bowled, long-stemmed pipes. Shops were abundant, but we saw no customers. Early and late in the day, however, as we afterward observed, the merchants did a thriving trade. It was a matter of wonder with us how the numerous inns, clean and hospitable of exterior nearly all of them, managed to exist. Our own particular abode had all the appearance

of thrift, yet for several days we were the only guests. The landlord continued to devote himself to us, and we wanted for nothing when his shiny face was visible. We retain to-day an affectionate remembrance of him, his thin hair brushed sleekly back, his mustache bristling, his brisk presence filling the dining-room with a sense of comfort.

III.

IN mediæval times, Feldkirch was a feudal stronghold. It commanded the approach from the Swiss side to that province of the Austrian empire known as the Tyrol. It had its town-wall, fragments of which, together with two circular towers, still remain. It had its castle, too,—Schattenberg it was called. This battlemented bit of antiquity frowns upon the house-roofs from a rock-ledge. The barons who once dwelt within the massive gray barriers were stern warriors, and cruel landlords to their hard-toiling tenants in the town, and there is a sort of grim irony in the fact that the poor of the community now live within their knightly halls.

We ventured as far as the castle terrace one morning to get a comprehensive view of Feldkirch from the nearest point of outlook. Soon we had half-a-dozen bright, but dirty, children gathered about us. One little maid offered

to show us the interior of their home, but the glimpse we had of it through a doorless archway did not tempt us to accept the earnest invitation. The only attractive feature the grim pile presented was a clinging mass of crimsoned woodbine high on a tower that faced the south.

We grew fond of following a gradually climbing path that led from the castle along the edge of a fir forest. This woodland reached to the base of a beetling cliff that, in turn, was capped with trees. Near the pathway comfortable seats had been placed in the shade of spicy boughs. Below, the slopes were dotted with crocuses, and in pear-orchards the harvesting of the second hay crop was going on. As we loitered one afternoon in the woodland shadow, we saw a unique contrivance for economizing labor. Three peasants, two men and a woman, were at work with two barrows. At the summit of the slope a pulley was fastened, from which to the wheel of each barrow a rope extended; and while two tugged down, getting leverage by a cross-bar attach-

ment, the third guided the laden barrow, thus propelled, up the slope.

Sometimes we followed the pathway far on into the cool dimness of the fir wood, meeting peasants coming down from a distant mountain village. Often they bore bundles of fagots, and they gave us a never-failing word of greeting. Wherever we wandered while at Feldkirch, the country people spoke to us with a frequently amusing, but always marked, courtesy.

As we were exploring the windings of a lower path in the late sunlight, we came upon a little open-sided chapel, half set into the hillside. A bell hung in its tiny belfry, and an iron grating screened the tinsel and flower-decorated altar. From an adjoining crucifix a painful image of Christ looked down. We endeavored to discover to what local saint the shrine was sacred. The peasants answered our inquiries, but we failed to catch the holy name.

By trim hedges we strayed, with orchards now on one, now on the other, and now on both sides. In an unexpected spot we found a miniature lake,

where, to a diminutive boat-house, a slender craft was moored. We did not meet the owner of this toy lake and boat, although we longed to, that we might question him in regard to the pleasure to be derived from sailing on a sheet of water one hundred feet by eighty. From the upper windows of cottages, bulbs were suspended in wreaths and garlands. If this method of disposure was convenient and desirable, it was certainly not ornamental. When we emerged upon the highroad, it was to be confronted by the ever-recurring Tyrol shrine,—a picture of the Virgin and the infant Christ.

IV.

THE bells of Feldkirch have an unpleasant way of making more noise at five in the morning than at any other hour in the twenty-four, a habit against which a reformer would do well to protest. The town is usually so quiet, possibly it is thought wise to rouse the inhabitants thoroughly once each day. Sunday is the time of the greatest bustle. Every soul is abroad, and, be it said with praise, all seem intent on church-going.

Two of our windows looked down on the entrances to the four-hundred-years-old *Feld Kirche*, from which the town takes its name; and thither thronged to frequent services, the whole Sabbath through, all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children. Often the crowd was so great that all could not be seated, and there were bareheaded groups around both doorways. Even the dogs, usually present in large numbers, were extremely decorous.

A graceful gothic tower, quaint of

form, rises above the *Feld Kirche*, and within the church's somber walls of gray is a meritorious picture accredited to Holbein, and a pulpit that even one satiated with fine church furnishings can regard with an admiring eye. A dark-bearded, brown-robed Capuchin friar, strolling meditatively by the hotel one day, reminded us that Feldkirch possessed a Capuchin Church. Whenever we strayed through the wide *Markt Gasse*, with its two plashing fountains, we were unfailingly amused by the uncomely fresco of St. John above the entrance to the *Johann Kirche* at the end of the street.

From our favorite woodside walk, we often looked speculatively down on the Italianesque Campo Santo, with the desolate church in the center of the inclosure, but we never visited it. We could see that the walls were not decorated after the fashion that prevails in Pisa, and there was no holy earth from Calvary to attract our tread. At Feldkirch the Jesuits have a large and flourishing school, prettily named the "Stella Matutina." The country round wants not

for sacred edifices. As we wandered toward the adjoining village of Rankweil one morning, emerging from the valley in which Feldkirch lies, we beheld spire after spire rising from the plain of the Rhine which bends and broadens away to the Lake of Constance.

V.

ABOVE and below our Tyrol town, the river Ill has cut gorges whose sides mount sheer toward heaven in jagged grandeur. By paths of easy ascent, one may climb to *Maria Grün* or *Kanzale* on either side of the upper gorge, or to the *Margaretenkapf* or *Veitskapf* on either side of the lower.

Roaming among the yellowing chestnuts on the *Veitskapf*, while yet the day was cool, we turned from watching the Ill below, dancing away toward the Rhine, and scanned the wooded mountain spur that rose between us and the loftier summits at the base of which the larger river flowed. A tower thrust its gray battlements out above the trees and beckoned. We clambered down the *Veitskapf* by a zigzag path cut in the face of the cliff. On the banks of the Ill some laborers were enjoying an early potation. An arbored wine-garden, connected with a river inn, was wreathed with crimson and yellow woodbine..

We took the forest way to Tosters, a path that wound beneath giant fir-trees



under the western brow of the *Margaretenkapf*. Through parted boughs we had glimpses of meadows where hay-makers were toiling. To reach the hamlet, with its slender-towered church, we were obliged, after a time, to leave the coolness and the shadow, and cross the plain in the blazing sun. Beyond Tosters, a lane opened for us an upward road.

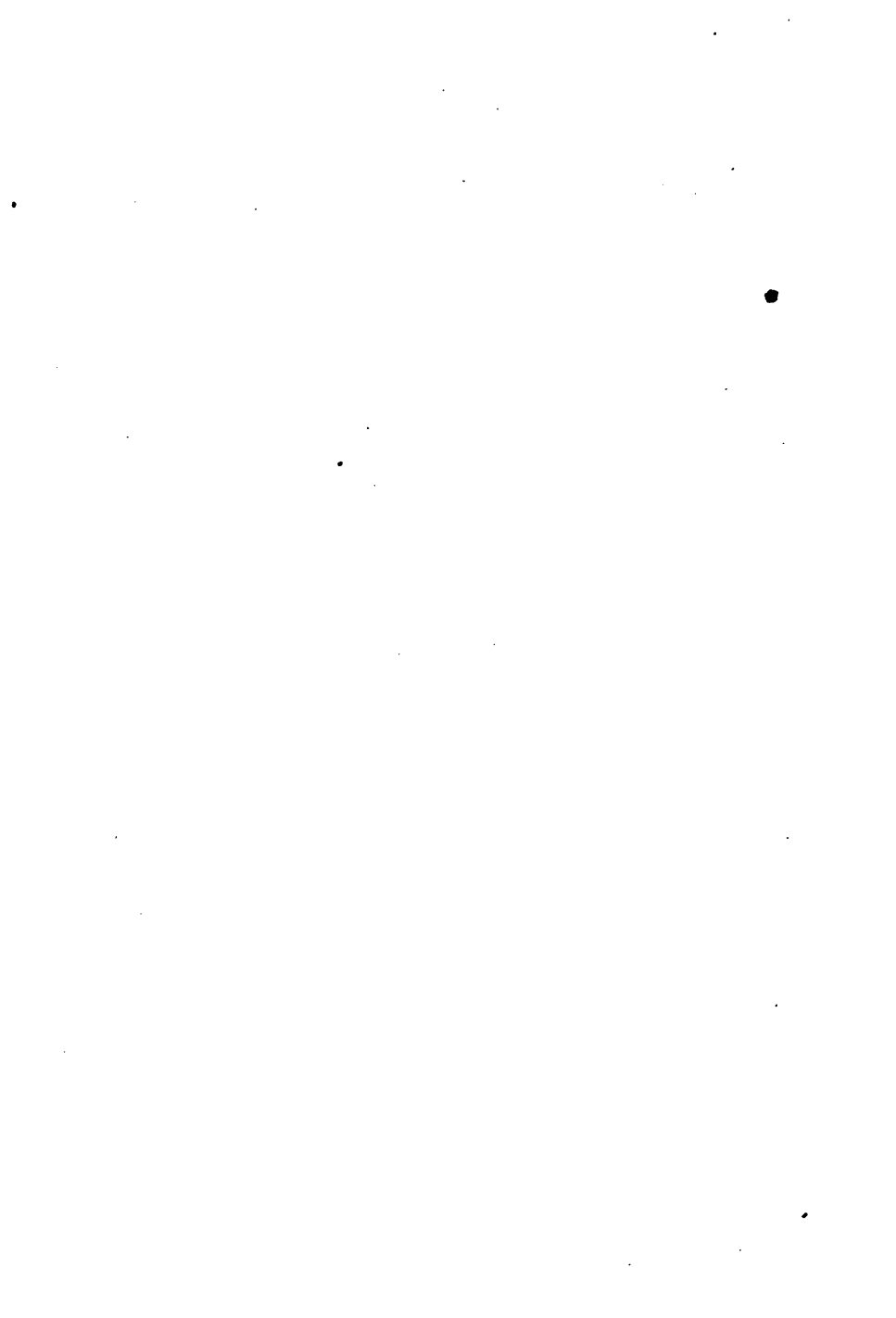
Two wrinkled housewives, sunning themselves in a doorway, assured us that it would lead us to the castle. Soon we found ourselves in the spacious aisles

of a majestic fir wood. The ground was sprinkled with wild myrtle and the glistening leaves of the hepatica,—a lovely carpet for the feet of spring. We rested upon a lichened boulder, and listened to the mystic creaking of the boughs, — wood runes untranslatable, — and heard, ever and anon above the sighing, the clear twitter of a lonely bird. Sunbeams played at hide and seek among the branches; ivy twined lovingly about many a sturdy bole. Ere long we climbed to the castle keep to find the ancient entrance stoutly boarded. Down we plunged into a valley, where a tiny hamlet with its tiny church was nestled, and so on up again, to be thwarted a second time by oaken barriers. Only a peep into the grassy courtyard rewarded us, and we were obliged to leave the ruin of Tosters to the encompassing calm of the forest that has folded it about these many centuries. Toward the plain we sauntered lazily, and refreshed ourselves on country fare at the *Gasthaus zum Grünen Baum*.

VI.

QUIET as Feldkirch is by day, the pavements rarely echoing to the rattle of wheels, the stillness of the sunlighted hours is almost bustle compared with that of evening and night. As dusk draws on, comers and goers are rarely seen. Sometimes a boy darts out from one arcade and disappears beneath another. Occasionally a pair of lovers stroll by, or a belated laborer drags wearily home. The shops are closed, and all lower windows barred. It is not pleasant to be abroad, for the deserted streets begin to seem spirit-peopled. The lights in the houses burn dimly, and the gables take on all sorts of fantastic forms that tower in black silhouette against the sky. Then it is best to close the shutters, and, emulating the good people of Feldkirch, be cozy within, leaving to the darkness without its mysteries and its stars.

Crossing the Splügen.



CROSSING THE SPLUGEN.

*Where rose the mountains, line on line,
Above the brawling upper Rhine,
We heard from soaring tower and spire
Out-ring the mellow bells of Coire.*

*Sweet were the echoes downward borne
From heights that climbed to meet the morn;
From heights that bade the soul aspire
They rang, those tuneful bells of Coire.*

*While darker gloomed the armed firs,
While sharper loomed the mountain spurs,
While sunk the sun, a disc of fire,
They pealed, those ancient bells of Coire.*

*They rang of hopes, they rang of fears,
They rang of joys, they rang of tears,
They rang the wandering heart's desire,
Of home and friends. the bells of Coire!*

FAR into the quiet hours of the night sounded these melodious chimes, mingling their music with our dreams. When we rose the next morning at four, the sky was a mosaic of sapphire and silver. Stars were still sparkling when we left the hotel three-quarters of an hour later,

though the crests of the loftiest peaks had caught the advance light of dawn. The mountain slopes that reached valleyward were peopled with innumerable shadows. In the streets of Coire was a chill grayness that could be felt. The tower of the cathedral above the town swam in the mist, and the sound of its bells tolling five seemed melancholy and distant. There were lights in the post-house when we arrived, and the horses were already in the traces. We stored our belongings in the *banquette*, and mounted, wrapping ourselves in our warmest coats. The guards bustled about. A clerk came from the office and gave passengers their seats; then the driver whisked his long lash, and we started.

We crossed the muddy Plessur, and left the town by a wide bend of road. As soon as we struck into open country we saw traces of disastrous rains. Mountain torrents had covered fertile fields with slaty mud and masses of gravel. Across the meadows, streams were still cutting an unusual and destructive path. Orchards had been ruined, grain spoiled,

land for ever made a stony waste. The Swiss peasant has, in the mountain torrent, an ugly foe to battle with. In a few hours a trickling rillet may become a rushing stream, which spreads lamentable havoc if it bursts from the walls built to guard it.

Sleepy laborers were going fieldward, and afar, in the river bottom, we saw a mower wielding a scythe. In the chill vapor rising from the dewy lands he looked like the wraith of some dead toiler cutting a last swath in the gray dawn. With much clatter we sped through the dirty hamlet of Ems, where the earliest risers were astir. In the center of almost every house was a heavy archway leading to the stable in the rear. The windows looked dingy, the streets were rubbish-strewn, the doorways unswept, the small, square court-yards littered with straw and fagots. The appearance of the solitary inn was in keeping with that of the rest of the town. Cleanliness and comfort seemed to own no nook in the village.

At Richenau there was a change of horses and of drivers. The guard leaped

down and stamped about to warm himself. A sleepy peasant stood in the doorway of the post-house, and stared and gaped. The Rhine branches at Richenau. We left the Vorder-Rhine and the Göschenen road on our right, and began the ascent of the Valley of the Hinter-Rhine. The air was still nipping, though a rosy light lay on the southern and western slopes and the deeper shadows were gone. We climbed several hundred feet before we came to the villages of Bonaduz and Rhaezuns, and to a towering white chateau, a massive pile with a solitary turret, poised upon a cragged promontory above the river. Half an hour before we reached Thusis the sun suddenly shot a warm flood through an intersecting valley.

Thusis meant breakfast, and a second change of horses. In the former we took by far the greater interest. Eight o'clock is an hour when many good people are comfortably seating themselves for their morning meal, and we had already been three hours upon our journey. The Romans knew Thusis, and called it Tusaun; we had never known



it until now, and we called it "none too soon."

There was much delay in departing. A second conveyance had to be procured to provide for additional travelers, and slight repairs were necessary before our own lumbering vehicle could proceed. A crowd of townsfolk looked on open-mouthed while these were in progress. All the waiters and guests in all the hotels came to the doors and windows; in fact, for the moment, the place had the appearance of being *en fête*.

Just beyond Thusis we entered the noted *Via Mala*. Higher and higher, sheer above the brawling river, the road wound. A thousand feet of precipice hung its awful menace over us. Six hundred feet below, the river made boisterous echo amid the boulders. Firs clung to every possible place of support, fastened their tenacious roots in fissures, and sometimes leaned horizontally across the chasm. Curves in the roadway gave views of the broad, sun-brightened vale we had left behind. Above Thusis, guarding the entrance to the gorge of gloom, loomed a splintered crag, and

crowning it was the ruined tower of Hohen Rhætien. We dragged through tunnels; we crossed the abyss by graceful spans of stone that seemed all too frail, hanging over chaos like a spider's thread. There were ominous gaps in the highway wall, and in the road itself, that told of mountain tempests and of mountain torrents. It was well that we felt confidence in our driver. The masterly way in which he swung the whip gave us assurance. The explosions of his dexterous lash sounded from wall to wall, but the horses gave no heed to the echoed admonitions. They pricked up their ears, however, when the green valley of Schams broke upon the sight. A delightful contrast this vale proved to the awful grandeur of the Via Mala. There were white chalets, mowers in the fields, flocks grazing, and the towers of ruined castles pinnacled the heights.

There was a quaint old church at Zillis, the first hamlet we passed, and many of the houses were adorned with rude religious frescos. Strange models must, the local artists have had, if their outlines of form are accurate. Our atten-

tion was drawn to an animal painted upon a wayside inn, and we were at a loss to know whether it was intended for

an ox, or some antediluvian creature, until we caught a glimpse of the sign-board which decided the matter in favor of the ox.

On a southward-facing mountain slope were five villages, each one picturesque. The sound of cattle-bells was breeze-borne from lofty pastures, softened and made musical by distance. At Andeer we halted in a glaring hotel courtyard. No chill now lingered in the air, and we were glad when



we moved away from the confined space, and again felt the refreshing mountain breeze. Crocuses purpled thickly many of the fields, and the scarlet of ripe barberries showed by the wayside. In easy curves of ascent we climbed through an open fir wood where there seemed to be a mysterious whispering going on in the bough-tops. Then came the cool and quiet Rofna Ravine, through which the Rhine descends in a series of graceful waterfalls. Here were strewn titanic boulders, moss-grown many of them, that had, in some earlier age, been broken by earthquake throes, and hurled into the gorge from impending heights. Gracefully over the torrent hung the drooping mountain ash. There were mirror-calm pools; there were rock-worn basins where the water looked like a mass of eddying snow; there were deep, dark channels and turbulent rapids.

Near the southern entrance of the Rofna Ravine an unused bridge spans the Rhine. The grasses, weeds, and lichens are the perpetual and only wayfarers. So ashen and crumbly does the

ancient structure look, its lengthened lease of life must be some caprice of fate. By a narrow gateway of rock we emerged from the gorge into the sunny Rheinwaldthal, and soon were descending from the diligence at Splügen and bidding "mine host" at the inn make haste with his goodliest dinner. The great kitchen at the left of the entrance doorway promised well, and we soon found all our expectations realized.

From Splügen to the summit of the pass is a continuous ascent of nearly seven miles through a bleak and barren valley. The wind blew biting and keen. As we approached the solitary refuge near the summit, snow lay in patches around us. Below were a dozen wide loops of road, up which we had crawled. But ere long there was a change of speed. The boundary line between Switzerland and Italy was crossed, and the four horses struck into a brisk trot downward. The descent was gentle at first, but became more abrupt as we approached the custom-house at Dogana. Here there was the usual halt while the officials made sure we were innocent of all in-

tentions to cheat the Italian government, out of its duty on tobacco. Soon after



we left the custom-house and its desolate surroundings, the dark gulf and majestic mountain walls of the Liro gorge showed

us nature in her grandest aspect. Not even the wonderful defile of the Via Mala impressed us so deeply. We were encompassed by the sublime. We spun along a ribbon of road above an abyss that appeared bottomless. Did it not seem the height of hardihood to attempt the construction of a wide, firm highway down the side of so precipitous a chasm? What obstacles to overcome! What difficulties to surmount! Yet the success achieved was crowning. We rumbled through galleries hundreds of feet in length; upon our left was the solid rock of the mountain, upon our right the perforated wall of the tunnel hanging over space. We dashed down long zigzags, turning corners where the descent was sheer into the yawning gulf. Below us we could see the windings of the dangerous and unprotected old road, destroyed in many places by avalanches. We crossed a rushing mountain stream, the Medesimo, a short distance from the spot where it takes its mad plunge of six hundred feet into the Liro gorge. A few moments later we were whirling down a loop of the highway at the side

of the fall, and could follow the silvery veil till it shattered into fountains of spray upon the bowlders of the valley.

At Campo Dolcino we changed horses for the last time. The road now wound through ambering chestnut groves, following the foamy course of the Liro. What a contrast the villages and villagers were to those upon the other slope of the mountains! We knew by the dirt that we were in Italy. Among the most wretched human beings on the face of our busy little planet are the peasants of the Liro valley. Pitifully poor, miserably housed, they drag out a sorry existence, subsisting on goats' milk, chestnuts, and the few vegetables they can coax to grow in the rocky soil. Dull, emaciated faces peered from smoky windows as we rattled by; scrawny, half-naked children rolled in the dust and in the muddy gutters by the wayside. It was a relief to leave the villages, and find the spreading branches of the great chestnuts arching over us. Far, far up these groves scale the mountain sides, and the softly tinged boughs were thick with burrs.

At a sudden turn, we came upon a charming pastoral picture. Through a ruined archway a shepherd, with cloak and crook, was leading his sheep to the fold. Now every hamlet had its slender campanile. A drowsy balm had crept into the air. There was a haze in the southern distance,—a warm, dreamy glow. *Bella Italia* was ours at last. Vineyards began climbing the terraced mountain spurs, and down we dashed into ramshackle, queer old Chiavenna, happy to be under the southern skies once more.



Idling at Bellaggio.



IDLING AT BELLAGGIO.

I.

NOWHERE in all the lovely length and breadth of the Italian lake-land is there a more enticing spot in which to enjoy the *dolce far niente* of existence than Bellaggio. Nature has clothed the shores of Como with a semi-tropical garment of verdure, but to the promontory, at the base of which Bellaggio nestles, she seems to have given an even richer dower. Elsewhere the airs breathe spicy odors, but here they are laden with attar of roses, dew-distilled; elsewhere the moonlight gilds with the glint of romance the cot upon the plain, but here it transforms into a fairy palace every tiled roof that overhangs the lane-like streets; elsewhere the songs of birds are beguiling, but here they are irresistible, unfolding new and more passionate secrets to the ear of night. Bellaggio means much to the memory,—sunlight fully obscured, moonlight unrivaled.

the beauty of the lake, the grandeur of the mountains, and lastly, idleness—hours gliding by like the smooth current of a stream, leaving only a sense of contentment and calm.

Yet there were times in our Bellaggio tarry when idleness was at an ebb, and we felt ourselves stranded on the shores of Do-Something, whence these recollections are gathered.

II.

THE windows of our room looked across the lake toward Cadenabbia and the Villa Carlotta, toward Gitiante and its slender bell-tower, and toward Mount Crocione, climbing — olive orchard, chestnut grove, brown pastures, and rock ridges— to the ever-changing clouds and the deep sapphire sky. We never tired by night of watching the stars come out above the broad mountain crest, and of seeing the villa lights far, far below, faintly illumine the liquid heaven of the lake. When the wind blew in shore the sound of Gitiante's bells came over to us softly, never mournfully, but always merrily. We had a peep of Menaggio, too, in its quiet haven,— gleaming white walls by day, and by night a kaleidoscopic shifting of pearl and topaz lights.

Often we would sit by the windows and study our mountain vis-a-vis, and we grew to have a great fondness for the bluff old giant that advanced toward

us, or retreated from us, according to caprice or whim. Occasionally he put his gray cap on, and never showed his head the day long. Sometimes he wore a cloak jauntily across one shoulder, and once he withdrew from our sight altogether, whereat we were inclined to weep with the elements. Not until the morning of our departure, however, did he stand forth in fullest splendor, every outline clearly chiseled, every massive feature distinct. This we held to be an acknowledgment of our homage to his charm.

In passing boats we took a never-failing interest, from the puffing and prosaic steamer to the gliding barque with a ray of moonlight glancing from its snowy sail. There were craft in which pleasure parties reclined at cushioned ease, rowed by smart boatmen after the ordinary fashion; there were vessels for small traffic, a trifle larger, with hoop-shaped awnings, beneath which oarsmen stood erect and propelled the boat with the motion of the Venetian gondolier; and there were huge, unwieldy sloops, with awkward sails and enormous oars, at

each one of which a cadaverous man was tugging. It was painful to watch the patient efforts of these modern galley-slaves; and for all their straining they scarcely progressed a mile an hour.

Beneath our windows, flower and shrub-planted terraces led to the water's edge, and on the right a sycamore alley, where there were seats at intervals, afforded an inviting promenade along the shore. Here there were northward-opening vistas that commanded the sweep of the lake toward Colico, and the mountain chain beyond. In the rear were gardens that were always cool, where the slender stems of the bamboo tapered gracefully, and the oleanders stood like wind-waved fountains of emerald and rose.

III.

IN the matter of streets, Bellaggio possesses a slight advantage over Jerusalem, for it has *two* highways along which a vehicle may pass. One skirts the margin of the lake, and connects at the upper extremity of the town with the other, which bisects the hill-slopes.

Most of the thoroughfares are overgrown laneways, which climb the hill by long series of broad stone steps. Picturesque with fruit-stalls, dark archways, tiny balconies, and the jutting corners of irregular roofs, these *vie* are not otherwise alluring. Shouting children, wooden-shod, clatter up and down them. In one particular street there was always a group of women gossiping when we passed. Their attitudes were so unconsciously artistic that we forgave them their gabbling tongues.

Bellaggio's hotels, cafés, offices, and shops are all upon the lower highway which follows the curve of the shore, with the exception of a few modest es-

tablishments that none save the curious are likely to discover. The trades-people, aim to fascinate by making a fine display, and their success is unquestioned. A stroll through the shady arcade where many of the shops are situated reveals



various phases of Italian character. One may look, may examine, and need not purchase, but one will not fail to be importuned. Pause a second, cast even an admiring glance toward an object exposed for sale, and the ambitious vender will rush forth with gestures and smiles, and words that link themselves musically. There is no apparent disappointment if you refuse to purchase, and you *will*

refuse when you hear the price, if you venture so far as to inquire. There is an oriental blandness in the way a Bellaggio merchant names his price. He is telling himself all the time that the *signore* does not appear to be fool enough to buy at such a figure, but "those crazy foreigners, ah! who can say?" Occasionally the glib fellow gets a customer, and then his fabulous profit compensates for long hours of the empty patronage of admiration.

Bellaggio is not without its industries, and the inlaid olivewood, fashioned in various designs, is most likely to loosen the purse-strings. The workmen who follow the trade of carving and inlaying have tiny, shadowy shops removed from the lower avenues of traffic, and the passer-by hears the hum of diminutive wheels, the buzzing of saws, the grating of files, and sees, in the dusty dusk, tangled heads bent intently over box, or table, or some smaller article of ornament.

On the widest of the hill-ascending streets there is an establishment where coarse rugs and hangings are woven in

dull and gay colors. Girls sit sewing in the doorways. Within there is a bewildering shifting and shuttling of threads that grow to fabrics through the magic of looms. It is not, however, because of this industry that we have a bright spot in memory for this street of many steps. An old fruit-woman, who was the proprietor of a stand, just at the spot where the *via* broadens before ending, became our special friend, and for her sake we hold it in fond recollection. She was fat and quite forty. Her smile was expansive, its breadth being in direct ratio to the quantity of fruit purchased. Her figs were unequaled, and we found them always



fresh, except on one occasion when a violent and prolonged rainfall prevented the fruit-growers from gathering them. As for rosy peaches and apples and great yellow pears, these were arranged in orderly and enticing rows. When the chestnut season began, a little black pot, in a dark entry-way adjoining the stand, was kept perpetually steaming, and a cupful of puff-sided nuts could be had for a penny.

IV.

AT Bellaggio the beggar plies his trade with success, for he has abundant prey. We marveled that there was not a greater



competition. As far as we were able to discover, Bellaggio beggars numbered three,—a crippled boy, a jolly, happy-go-lucky, one-legged man, who seemed to regard the whole thing as a joke, and an old codger whose eternal whine would

have done credit to a dog baying the moon. This last pest we first fell in with on the pleasant sycamore avenue leading along the shore of the lake to the Villa Melzi; but afterward he came nearer the town, and finally we heard his dismal plaint beneath the arcade of the *Via Mercatori*. We longed to see some one give him a vigorous shaking, for we felt sure his woes and wants were wholly feigned. None of his countrymen were inclined to lay hands on him, however, and we did not venture to make the experiment.

Bellaggio will never be in favor with the ambitious sight-seer. There are no ruins to visit, no churches to loiter in, no galleries to attract. The campanile of San Giovanni, viewed from afar, is a fitting, crowning pinnacle for the roofs of the town; seen near at hand, there is nothing about it to arrest the attention. The sacred edifice itself is said to possess an altar-piece by an artist of some merit, but we never beheld it, though we many times strayed through the *Piazza della Chiesa*. We were heartily glad, for the time being, to forget art and antiquity,

and to give ourselves up to the enjoyment of nature and the present.

In the vernacular of mountaineers, the Villa Strebboni is "rather a stiff climb." It is perched above the town on the summit of the promontory which separates the Como and Lecco arms of the lake. There is a vague story told in regard to a tower or castle that once stood on the very topmost point of the villa grounds. The Visconti of Milan are said to have erected it, together with the tower whose ruins rise above Varenna, for the purpose of maintaining their power over the surrounding region. There is nothing now to suggest the presence of these mediæval tyrants. The winding roadways and walks, the carefully cut terraces, the miniature lakes, the grottoes and outlook platforms, all have a decided nineteenth-century air. In strolling about the villa grounds, one finds innumerable vistas that reveal new lake and mountain pictures; the bolder aspect of the shores in the direction of Lecco, contrasting strangely with the softness of shade and line toward Colico and Como.

The villas of Bellaggio afford fine opportunities for studying Italian landscape-gardening, some of the flower-beds of the Villa Melzi, and the terraces, walks, and hedges of the Villa Guilia, being markedly unique. The last-named villa, a stiff building in the style of the last century, is situated on a terraced height above Lake Lecco. We often wandered out to it along one of the *via provinciale*, and crossed to the Como arm of the lake by a wide, grassy, hedge-inclosed avenue, cut across the promontory through orchard and vineyard. The windows of the villa command a magnificent panorama. Even the pedestrian has before him, beyond the bowery pathway, the silvery gleam of distant water and the majestic summits of the more distant mountain range. Sometimes we made sallies of exploration into the crooked lanes that led hither and thither from the wide avenue. We always found tempting grape-clusters hanging just out of reach, and saw, dotted about in the vineyards, olive-trees, with unma-tured fruit. It was impossible to get lost. One always emerged upon one of

the provincial roads after a time. White, dusty, and dazzling they were, but perfectly cared for.

At its further extremity, the avenue of the Villa Guilia descends to the lake shore by a stately flight of stairs, on either side of which is a row of mournful cypresses. On the lake at this point is a dirty and dilapidated fisher village. A short distance beyond, in the direction of Bellaggio, is the Villa Melzi. Admittance to the grounds may be gained near the family chapel, in which are several noteworthy reliefs in marble, among them one by Canova. We found the trees in the grounds of the Villa Melzi more fascinating than the flowers, despite the gardener's ingenuity displayed in arranging beds to imitate huge bouquets, and in setting foliage plants to represent vari-colored streams of lava. No two trees give more character to a landscape, or are in themselves more nobly individual, than the Roman pine and the cedar of Lebanon, and here we saw both.

Even the hurried tourist who tarries at Bellaggio but a brief hour, cannot fail to notice an open-air café that is situated

near the lake, a few steps from the large pier. To the initiated this is a favorite spot for loitering about two o'clock in the afternoon, as at that hour steamers arrive from all quarters, and the comers and goers pour by in a hurrying, eager tide. One may sit beneath the roof of vines and boughs, sip black coffee, or trifle with an ice, and look out upon the bustle and babel. Here it was our wont to repair, and here we always found our friend, the photographer, and his cheery wife, enjoying existence like true philosophers. If there was an energetic person in all Bellaggio it was our friend, the photographer. He believed in getting the most out of life, just as he did in getting every possible phase out of nature or humanity with his camera. The Bellaggian atmosphere did not seem to affect him. Perhaps he resisted its influence, but he did not appear to. He was on the hotel-top in the early morning taking cloud effects on Mt. Crocione; he crossed our angle of vision in the heat of noon, alert and eager to catch the light and shadow on a sail of terra cotta hue; and we knew of his experimenting

by moonlight with a sixteen-minute exposure, though why he chose exactly that time he could not explain either to our, or his own, satisfaction. Some might have regarded him a crank, but we found him vastly entertaining.

V.

No chronicle of our happy hours at Bellaggio is complete that does not do homage to Carlotta Bianchi Bellosio, — whether Signora or Signorina we never ascertained. She came in upon us for the first time just as the afternoon lights were growing soft upon the lake, and her low tones and sweet manners were in perfect keeping with the calm outside.

Did our visitor speak English? we asked.

Such a gesture of despair as was our answer! It was far more eloquent than a lengthy dissertation. Our first interview bordered upon pantomime. But as the days slipped by, and the indefatigable little lady arrived at the appointed hour, tongues grew more and more fluent; her animated presence seemed to give them courage. Her neatly-shod feet placed closely together, her body poised forward, her gloved hands in quick and constant motion, her dark, intelligent eyes keen and flashing,

—she was an irresistible inspiration, and she is a gracious memory.

If she grew ardent, free, familiar, in the excitement of speech, when she rose to go she took up her Milanese suavity with her mantle or her umbrella. Her exit from the room was an artistic performance which defies imitation.

From Carlotta Bianchi Bellosio we parted with a sincere "*mi dispiace.*" May her pupils be many!

VI.

EVENINGS at Bellaggio recall music and moonlight,—Neapolitan airs sung by strong, sweet male voices, and Luna in every phase of her celestial reign. On the upper terrace the singers would gather, and to the accompaniment of guitar, mandolin, and violin, pour out those impassioned ditties of the south that should be heard in the open air and beneath the unclouded skies of night. Like some flowers, these songs lose much of their beauty if transplanted. They need an Italian setting.

The singers were always in jaunty attire, and entered into the spirit of the music with charming abandon. Their bodies would sway with the rising or falling of a cadence, and often their feet would trip in merry time when they broke into the chorus of a particularly lively song.

On the last night of our stay at Bel-

laggio the sky was overcast, and heavy masses of clouds were piled ominously behind the western mountains. Before the Neapolitans appeared, we hailed a boatman and sought the Lecco arm of the lake. As we rounded the precipitous promontory, Varenna's lights shot brilliant beacons out of the dark and distant shore line, and ridge on ridge against the sky, where the moon was struggling through the crowding vapors, stood the gloomy and threatening peaks. Then began a brilliant display of aërial pyrotechnics. Flash followed flash without a sound. At one moment we would see the wide sweep of the lake toward Lecco shimmering like a floor of silver; the next, depths of impenetrable darkness would engulf us. It was too much for our boatman, — superstitious like most ignorant Italians. He pulled a rapid retreating stroke, and soon the cheery sound of mellow voices was borne out to us on the jasmine-scented breeze.

Reader, shall we say farewell to Bellaggio, or, rather, *a rivederci*? At least let us, ere we go, indulge in one more day-dream !

*The book unconned is cast aside,
The moment is not meet for prose ;
I read a rhyme upon the tide
That just below me ebbs and flows.*

*The arching sky is jewel-fair,
The breeze is like a low refrain ;
There is a perfume in the air
Like opening roses after rain.*

*I drowse and dream although awake,
And in my dreaming sinks and swells,
Wind-borne across the placid lake,
The chime of Gitianté's bells.*

*Afar the villas glow and gleam,
Half bowered by bay and laurel bough ;
Above, in majesty supreme,
Mount Crocione lifts its brow.*

*I mark along the middle slopes
The clustering groves of chestnuts climb.
Thick as a young girl's budding hopes
When life is at the pairing-time.*

*And, scaling height on terraced height
Through jagged valleys reaching down,
I see the javelins of light
Shatter upon the cliffs of brown.*

*Or, gliding with the boats that pass,
In idle errantry I go
Toward Alpine mountain peaks that mass
Their chill white pyramids of snow ;*

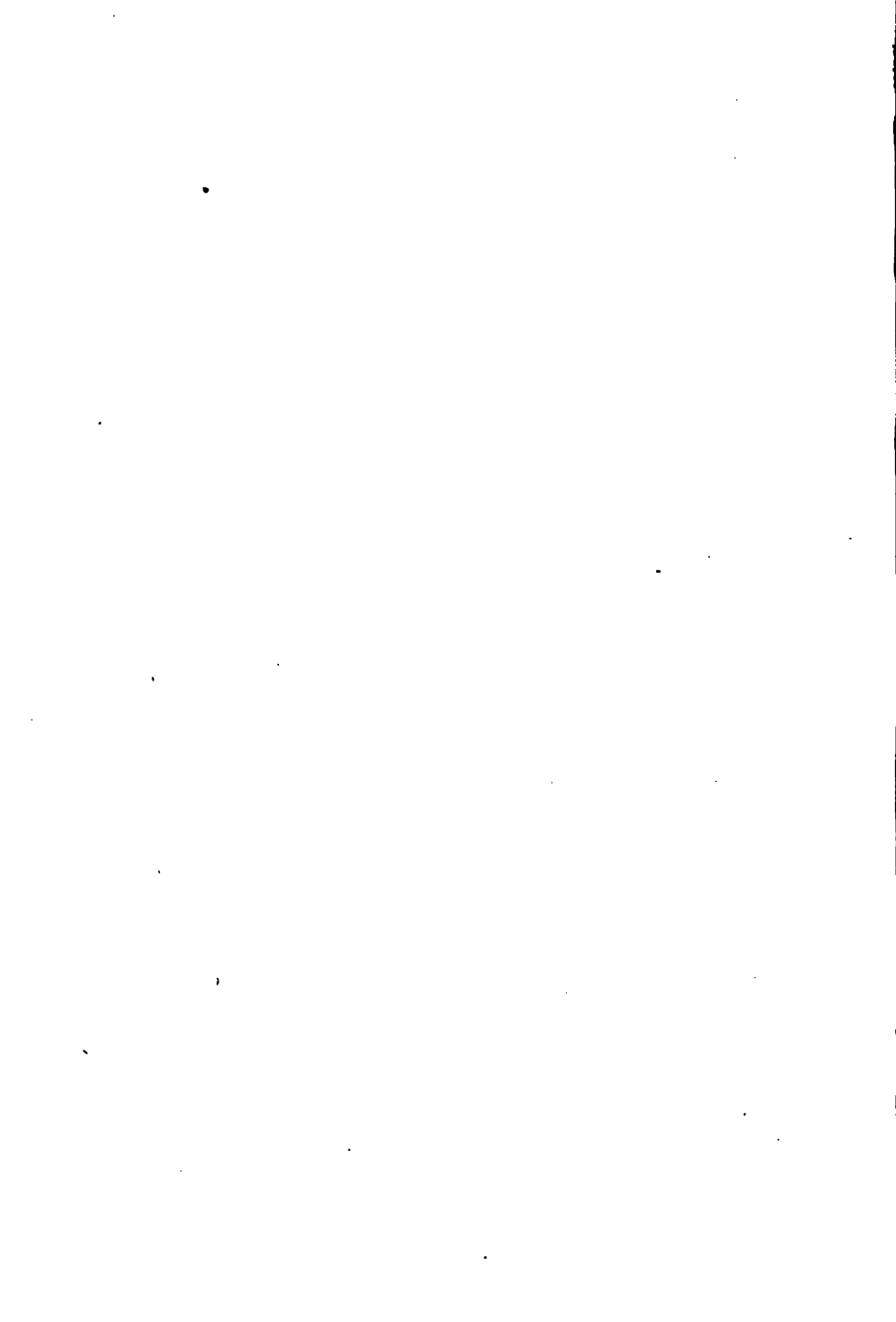
*Or toward that golden south that lies
 'Twixt sapphire-shining sea and sea,
And beckons on with dusk-dark eyes
 Across the plains of Lombardy.*

*I know the ripe delight of life
 No cloud-encompassed clime can give;
Here all the radiance is rife
 That elsewhere seems so fugitive.*

*Then blow, O ye enrapturing airs,
 Nor fade one beam, O amber glow!
The heavy fardel of my cares
 Has vanished, blest Bellaggio.*



In Merry Milan.



IN MERRY MILAN.

I.

IF one had the temerity to aver that Milan is the noisiest city in the world, hour by hour, through the consecutive twenty-four of each day, it can readily be imagined how Paris would cry out, how London would roar, how New York would clamor in protest. Yet many times have I been on the verge of this statement, holding in clear recollection certain Milanian days. Save in one respect, my abode was all I could have wished. The cook had the secret for concocting a palate-pleasing sauce for macaroni; "mine host" had a suavity that light patronage did not ruffle; there were no long and winding stair-flights to climb; a rose tree perfumed the shady courtyard with its luxuriant bloom, but an infinite multiplication of sounds that the darkest hour of night did not silence ascended for ever about the spot.

Hotel Babel (to rechristen it) stands at

the junction of three thoroughfares. The pavements are smooth and clean, and like the walls of the impending buildings, capable of producing innumerable echoes. It seemed, too, as though the particular space of sky above had entered into a league with the streets and walls, and encouraged them in their noisy mimicry. Gradually I grew to be unconscious of many sounds. The night-long rattle of tramcars, and the explosion of cab drivers' whip lashes, had but little effect upon my dreams. But my ears never became deadened to the tidal waves of uproar that several times swept in from the highway on which my window looked. The billows invariably swelled and surged after midnight. They seemed to rise far away, gradually to gather force, and then to break with full violence just below.

Gazing down one night on the dimly-illuminated highway, I saw eight or ten men pass with swinging steps. Where the three streets converged they separated with a final outburst from their stentorian lungs. The whole affair had an element of mystery enshrouding it,

yet plotters or evil-doers would never have proclaimed themselves to the world with such blatant unconcern. Evidently the men were guilty of no greater crime than that of robbing me of slumber. I explored the thoroughfare by sunlight and found it frankly innocent of everything suspicious. Not even a wine-shop did I discover, but a new sound I did encounter in the vociferous chanting of several priests in a quaint old church of Milan's ducal days.

II.

MILAN is the Paris of Italy. Let him who is skeptical in regard to this fact, visit the arcade of Victor Emmanuel almost any evening, it matters little at what season of the year. The gaiety is infectious. Straightway the loveliness and grandeur of the cathedral in the adjoining piazza will be forgotten; straightway the thought of the noble life-work of Leonardo da Vinci, whose face looks benignly down from a lofty pedestal near at hand, will slip from memory. The bright, active existence of to-day will lay hold upon the senses, and, at least for a space, enthrall them. Fair faces, stylish costumes, a brilliant display in shop windows, will allure the eye; soft strains, clear laughter, and the music of the melodious Italian tongue will charm the ear; while the air will be laden with the perfume of bou-tonnières and the tempting fumes of coffee steaming upon the crowded café tables.

Not unlike a bit of the Parisian Bois is a glimpse of the Milan public gardens on a Sunday afternoon. Interest centers in notes that float from a grove of limes. Here, around the music-stand the throng is densest, but everywhere is seen the joy of life—by the shores of the mimic lake, on the broad pathways, in the secluded walks among the shrubbery. The Milanese are a happy and prosperous people.



But mayhap, reader, these scenes do not reveal to you the Milan of your dreams. Nor yet, I fancy, will the grand memorial arch, begun by the first Napoleon, that stands majestic and lonely near the military parade-ground on the edge of the city; nor yet the bare battlements of the dilapidated castle of the Visconti and Sforza. These are the names to conjure with if you would bring back

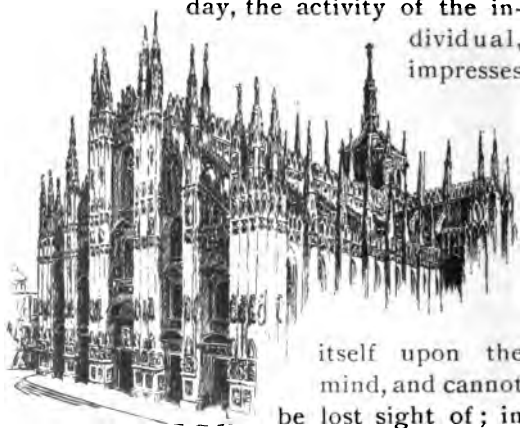
mediæval Milan, for little of the old city really remains. You come upon reminiscences of it here and there, in narrow and crooked byways, where curious stairways ascend from the courts of massive and gloomy dwellings, and where the aisles of small churches reek with the frankincense of dead centuries. And yet the outlines of old Milan are more easily traced than those of Leonardo's great picture, "The Last Supper," which hallows the dismantled refectory of the suppressed monastery of *Sante Maria delle Grazie*. Here the needs of war have supplanted those of religion, for the monastery is now a cavalry barracks—a fact that goes to prove that the modern Italian, besides being a utilitarian, is not infrequently something of an iconoclast.

III.

SHALL we, with Lowell, call the Milan Cathedral "a stranded glacier?" If seen under the transmuting alchemy of moonlight, what one of nature's marvels does it more closely resemble? Coming to the Lombard capital from the vales of Switzerland, after visiting the Grindelwald or Rhone glacier, or scaling the precipitous Bossons beneath the great brow of Mont Blanc, one will unfailingly see the force of the poet's comparison. In this building even the untutored must recognize the poetry of architecture. Such a structure should be studied both without and within, in its entirety as well as in its parts. As in the perfect ode each stanza is in itself a finished bit of workmanship, necessary to a homogeneous whole, so in the Milan Cathedral, each skillfully wrought portion goes to make up a symmetrical unity. Grinning gargoyle and winged seraph are alike needful.

The busy arcade of Victor Emmanuel

and the Duomo piazza are adjoining, yet to move from one to the other is like passing at a single step from the nineteenth into the fifteenth or sixteenth century. In the arcade, the life of to-day, the activity of the individual, impresses



itself upon the mind, and cannot be lost sight of; in the old piazza, the cathedral dwarfs everything into insignificance. No matter how full may be the tide of humanity, the ebb and flow seem less than a summer ripple.

If you enter the piazza when the sun is high, the doors of the cathedral will naturally allure you. There will, no doubt, be a whining and cringing beggar

to swing back the heavy leather curtain at the portal, but one glimpse of the soft gloom of the interior will repay you a thousandfold for any alms you may bestow on the presuming mendicant. Within, no importunate verger will assail you and beg to be allowed to pour his stereotyped jargon into your unwilling ears. You will be free, and will be in an instant exalted. You will forget that the roof-work is an imitation, not marble; that the scriptural stories are portrayed in modern glass, not in that hallowed and mellowed by forty decades. You will dream of music if there be not a note rising; you will feel within your soul a silent prayer if there be not a bended knee at any secluded altar or shrine.

When the longing for freer air and unobstructed light comes again upon your spirit, ascend to the devious ways of the roof, and there, when you have explored to your heart's desire, find a nook for rest somewhere in the tower upon its shady side. Now let your eyes roam whithersoever they will; let them linger for a moment upon the rooftops of this stately city of the Milanese, sweep with a

vast sweep the great, fertile, storied plain of Lombardy; touch the dome of the far-away Pavian Certosa that the lordly Visconti founded; glance upon the towers of Pavia itself; and finally rest upon those ice-crowned peaks that the enchantment of distance paints with amethyst, rose, and gold. Sovereign and supreme will rise Monte Rosa, and you could bear with you from Milan no nobler nor fairer silhouette impressed upon the clear horizon of memory.

Viewing Verona.



VIEWING VERONA.

I.

SEEN after Milan, Verona is like a mediæval picture. The spirit which dominates new Italy—reconstruction, upbuilding, renovation—has only begun to make itself felt here. The past and the present are just joining hands across the centuries. There is a reminiscence of the Austrian occupation in the girdle of brick and earth works which gives the city the air of a military stronghold, but the officers who swing through the narrow streets and frequent the cafés in the evening are the staunch adherents of King Umberto and the House of Savoy. The situation of Verona is picturesque. Looking southward across a plain rich with vineyard and orchard, it is flanked by mountain outposts through which the River Adige, rushing down the gorges of the Tyrol, here pours with true Alpine impetuosity.

We descended from the train, one

warm mid-afternoon, at the bustling station of *Porto Vescovo*. A golden haze hung about the mountain spurs, and softened the fortifications above the town. Our horse, carriage, and coachman, were alike dilapidated. We rattled over the pavements hotel-ward in momentary danger of a collapse, yet we arrived safely, though not speedily, at our destination. A glimpse, in the suburbs, of the fruit-women at their stands prepared us for what we saw afterward in the *Piazza delle Erbe*. Our Albergo possessed a fountained courtyard and a good larder, furthermore we were led to suspect that it had once been a palace. We should have been requiring indeed had we demanded greater luxuries, or a more picturesque environment.

II.

THE *Piazza dei Signori*, into which no noisy cabman may desecratingly drive, will always hold the visitor's attention, but the best time for viewing it is in the late afternoon. Then no glare of light reflects dazzlingly from its smooth pavement; the imposing central figure of the poet Dante looks gravely from his pedestal; the two towers that here pierce the Verona skies are sharp against the softened blue; and the cooing of the doves that flutter about and above the graceful arches of the loggia is almost the only sound heard. Two of the palaces that front the piazza with their grim and scarred façades are now government buildings, but were once the residences of that princely family, the Scaligers, under whom Verona attained the height of her power and magnificence as an independent municipality.

Into the courtyards of both these edifices we peered. In one we found a carved gateway of remarkable execution,

representing various old-time arms. The bases of the pillars were drums; the pillars themselves strange-fashioned cannon; the capitals mortars, from the mouths of which huge shot threateningly protruded; while worked above the arch in a kind of frieze were torches, shields, swords, daggers, and in one corner, a helmeted knight. In the courtyard of the *Palazzo della Ragione* several soldiers were lounging on the spacious open staircase. It seemed to us that a group of Verona gentlemen of the fourteenth or fifteenth century would have been more in keeping with the surroundings; for, although this court has been partially rebuilt, the alternate layers of red brick and white marble preserve the mediæval effect.

La Loggia, or, in plain English, the town hall, is an exquisitely beautiful specimen of early renaissance architecture. With various slight changes it came down through the years, until it was necessary, about two decades since, to restore it. Still upon its summit in time-darkened marble, stand the statues of five eminent Verona citizens, Catullus

and the younger Pliny among them. The gilt and red adornments upon the façade blend softly with the white background. The columns that support the entrance arches spring with an airy grace, and, in the subdued afternoon light, the whole structure impresses one as does music in a minor key. It is like a tender symphony in stone.

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III.

THE *Piazza delle Erbe*, the forum of long ago, is the vegetable market of to-



day. It is reached from the *Piazza dei Signori* by a short, narrow, and arched street. In the latter there is quiet the day through; in the former there is bustle during at least eight hours of the twenty-four, and in the morning the scene is one that has few rivals in Italy. Scores

of huge white umbrellas are spread, covering the entire center of the square, and beneath them, at their carts and portable stalls, the market men and women ply a busy and babbling trade. Their attire is striking, their attitude unconsciously artistic, their gestures impressive, their jargon wholly incomprehensible.

At the upper end of the piazza stands the marble column which for many years bore the winged lion of St. Mark in token of Venetian supremacy. When Venice ceased to be an independent power the lion was removed, but it has recently been replaced. An ancient fountain in the center of the piazza is presided over by a female figure supposed to represent Verona. Regarded from the rear, the effect of this presiding genius is extremely ludicrous, for the crown upon her head is tilted at such a rakish angle that nights of merriment are forcibly suggested. For aught we know this may be truly emblematic of the old state of things in the city. Many of the buildings looking down on the *Piazza delle Erbe* were once palaces, and traces of

the frescoes they bore in their really palatial days are still visible. Late in the evening we had a hasty glimpse of the piazza while passing through an adjoining thoroughfare, and the lowered and neatly fastened umbrellas of the fruit and vegetable venders appeared like so many white-robed mummies erect and ghostly in the moonlight.

Possibly it would have been appropriate to gaze upon the house of the Capulets, in the adjoining *Via Capello*, in the same romantic light. Our view of it by day had been disillusionizing. The sun is a sad revealer of secrets, and shows in the same unfeeling way our gray hairs and wrinkles, and the seams and scars and rents which deface this traditionally noble mansion. The *Casa Capuletti* possesses a balcony still, but it is such an unstable, grimy, distressing affair that we are persuaded no modern-day Juliet could beguile her Romeo beneath it.

IV.

TWILIGHT had fallen when we rose from our first Verona dinner. In the *Corso Cavour* the pedestrian tide was setting steadily in one direction, and we suffered ourselves to be borne along by it. There was a delicious balm in the air, and over the lofty houses and the narrow streets the night was beginning to unroll her canopy of stars. Just before we turned from the Corso, we passed beneath a dilapidated Roman arch which spans the street. This relic of the days of empire was erected under Galienus, and now is called the *Porta de' Borsari*. Its cause for being is a matter of conjecture, but mayhap it has commemorated, century after century, some forgotten triumph of the ruling Cæsar's arms. It strikes one as having little interest unless viewed by night, when it is quite stern and imposing enough to satisfy one's idea of Roman austerity.

It was not long before we found ourselves in the wide *Piazza Vittorio Eman-*

ucle, on one side the broad promenade flanked by cafés, on the other the grim walls of the amphitheater rising spectrally through the uncertain light. We discovered a table where the flare of the gas jets did not fall, and, after a brisk waiter had brought us ices, we dreamily watched the gay Verona world saunter by. What handsome fellows the officers were — booted and sabred and mustached ! And how gallant to signoras and signorinas ! Then the great full moon rose above the center of the amphitheater and touched its rugged outlines with a golden glamor. Straightway we forgot the present with its gaily-gossiping crowd, and at one plunge leaped backward over nearly a score of centuries. For a moment that vast ruin stood intact before our eyes, tier rising over tier, just as it appeared to the citizens of the empire before the Goths, and that chief of Vandals, Time, conspired its overthrow.

*We sat sequestered from the gaslight's glare,
The swashing soldiers with their long cigars,
And saw, above the pleasure-peopled square,
The sea of night aglow with beacon-stars.*

*Against the sky, in jagged outline, rose
The serried roof-tops in a grim, gray blur,
And, reminiscent of unnumbered woes,
The mighty ancient amphitheater.*

*Then flowered the moon, and flung a radiant jet
Of silver light, the while we thrilled to know
The self-same orb had looked on Juliet,
The self-same moon had shone for Romeo.*

V.

THE taste for tombs developed by some travelers is surprising, and in Verona those who dote upon funereal trappings, on sculptured marble effigy and burial inscription, may indulge the liking to their heart's content. It is difficult, however, for even an enthusiast in mortuary relics to wax eloquent over the so-called "tomb of Guilia," — a dilapidated sarcophagus of red marble which is shown (for a consideration) to any one who chooses to ring at a little gate in a certain inclosed garden on the right bank of the Adige.

The tombs of the Scaligers, on the other hand, rarely fail to impress strongly the most prosaic tourist. Nothing can surpass in quaintness the little Lombardic chapel church of *Santa Maria Antica*, and the adjoining inclosure where, surrounded by lofty railings, rest in massive sarcophagi the princes of that renowned Verona family. They were tyrants, these Scaligers, neither better

nor worse than many other rulers of their time, but they encouraged the arts, gave Verona a place among the republics of Italy, and one of them, Can Grande, was the friend and patron of Dante.

A wizened and obsequious sacristan, whose keys, suspended from his neck, swung to and fro like a pendulum and made him seem a personification of Father Time, admitted us to the paved



inclosure. He placed us like so many lay figures, and began a voluble harangue in a mixture of French and Italian, throwing in, by way of variety, an occasional phrase of English. He might be talking yet had we not feed him and fled.

Verona is rich in sacred edifices, the

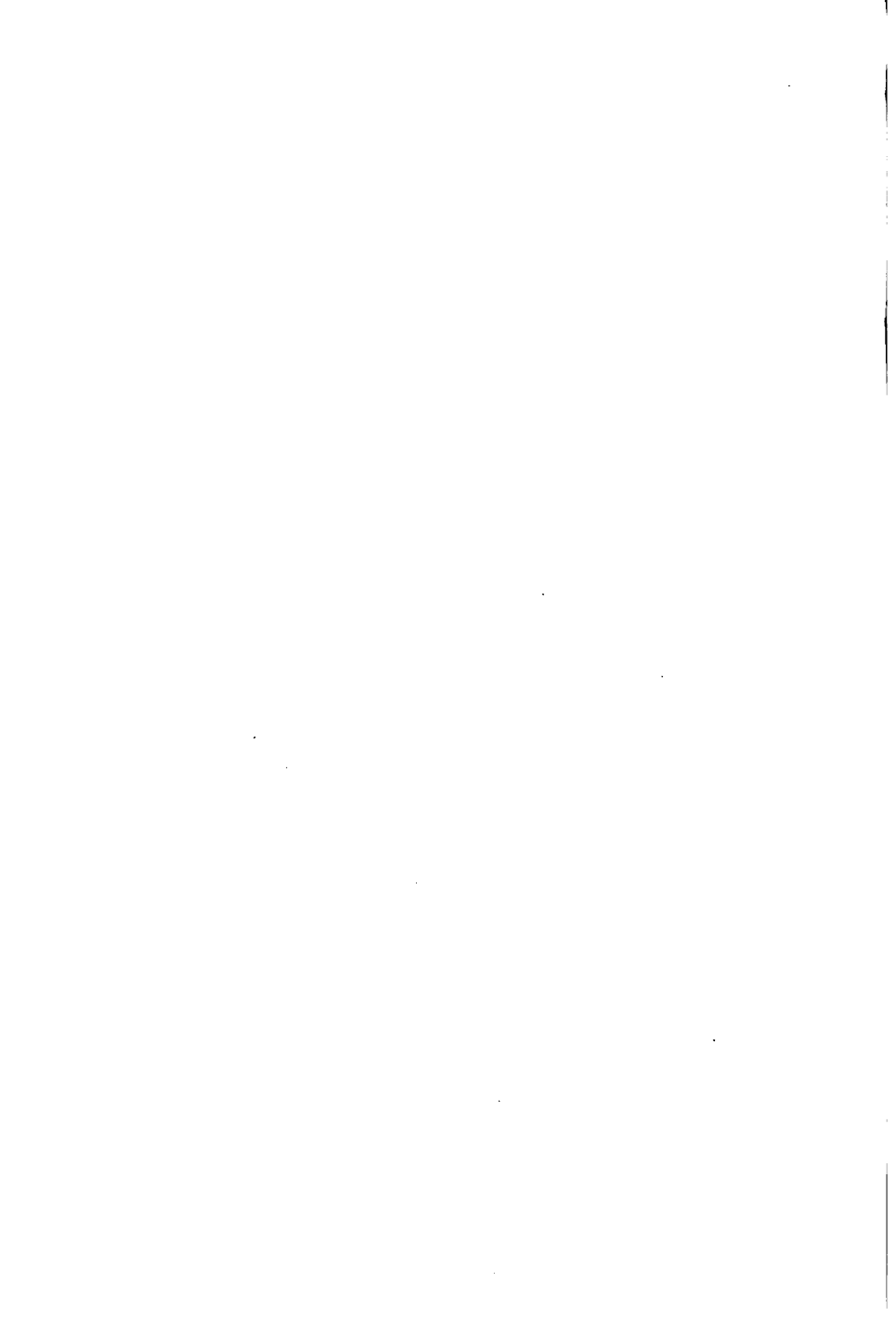
most interesting being *San Zeno Maggiore*, which is said to be the finest Romanesque church in northern Italy. We drove toward San Zeno in the early morning when laborers were starting for the vineyards and fields outside the city. Following a highway that skirts the Adige, we paused for a moment to look back, from a raised platform, at the fine old bridge which is now unused, *Ponte di Castel Vecchio*. A mark upon the river wall showed us that the shallow, chalky stream below could, at times, become a mighty, untamable torrent. The square in front of San Zeno was aglow with heat. The portals of the church were curious, and the campanile striking, but the cool, shady interior was more alluring, and we had it completely to ourselves. There was no sound but our footfalls to break the silence. In the majestic nave, in the spacious crypt, in the ancient cloisters, not a soul did we discover, and we recall the solitary aisles with a kind of awe. Are they always, we wonder, thus given over to spirits and to strangers?

It is a pleasure to view Verona while



untouched, for the most part, by the unsparing hand of Progress. Doubtless there will, ere long, come a time when its winding byways will be straightened, when its narrow streets, with their overhanging balconies, will be broadened, its churches more liberally restored. It is by no means now the stately Verona that Can Grande and Dante knew, but it is not yet cosmopolitan; it is still individual. And whatever happens, however modern it may hereafter grow, the amphitheater will stand, mutely eloquent, like the Colosseum, of the days and deeds that were.

Glimpses of Greece.



GLIMPSES OF GREECE.



I.

CLIMBING PENTELICUS.

WE had suddenly decided to climb Pentelicus on the morrow, and were in immediate need of a guide. When Paulos Papachristos appeared, with his oblique smile, his sweeping bow, and his little package of credentials, his name and his manner seemed sufficient warrant for engaging him, although we did take a peep at the words of praise bestowed upon him by former patrons.

We were on the point of setting out for a stroll through the moonlight to Mars Hill when Paulos found us, and, after the arrangements for our excursion of the coming day had been perfected, we suggested to our newly-engaged cicerone that he accompany us. He professed himself delighted with the invitation, and chattered away, while we circled the acropolis, as volubly as a cicada at high noon.

He was quite as cheerfully communicative at seven the next morning when he greeted us from his perch beside the driver on the carriage-box. Once beyond the confines of the city, every mountain on which the eye rested seemed to draw nearer through the transparent azure of the atmosphere. On the parade-ground buglers were summoning the cavalry for their maneuvers. Not a particle of white dust rose to fret us; the horses responded readily to the driver's every cluck; and so, amused by Paulos's unique efforts to air his knowledge of ancient Greek history in English, we whirled on without a pause through vineyards and olive

orchards until we reached the hamlet of Chalandri.

Here, while the horses dipped their noses deep in refreshing spring water, we had time to watch a peasant woman plaiting reed baskets. Her fingers worked with the rapidity and balance of machinery, and we fancied we detected in their movements the same measured beat that marked the fall and rise of children's voices borne out to us from the open doorway of a tiny school-house. A smile rested on the lips of the toiler; it may be she was joying over prospective drachmas which would clothe and feed little Daphne or Daphnis within, singsonging through the alphabet from alpha to omega.

Our way soon became toilsome. Though not steep, the road, rutted by the spring rains, was weed-grown and uncared for. In the middle distance the slopes of Hymettus were streaked purple and umber. We knew the bees were holding revel there because, beside the highway, we saw poppies that preserved the most vivid crimson of the sunrise, and morning-glories whose

trumpets were yet blowing airy greetings to the day.

Now we wound upward through dense thickets. From a little ravine came the musical note of a brook. At last we reached level ground where the track broadened and became smooth, and soon we found ourselves in a breezy poplar grove upon which, in rambling unshapeliness, looks a building that is reputed to be Attica's richest monastery. The spot was alluring. The murmur of the breeze in the boughs, and of the spring welling clear and cold near the base of one of the mottled white boles, bade us linger. But our pack-mule was laden, the muleteer waiting, and the sun momentarily climbing higher, so we quaffed a deep health and started.

At first the path dipped through an open fir wood, where a snake contested the right of way with us, and caused a temporary stoppage of our cavalcade. Paulos seized the muleteer's staff and speedily put his serpentship to rout. Leaving our beast of burden and his guardian to ascend by the easier, but more devious, pathway, we followed

close at the heels of our guide up the ancient road, down which the blocks of marble were haled for the temples and dwellings of the Athens of Hadrian, if not of Pericles. We set our feet in the interstices between rough paving blocks that had been imbedded in earth as long as the foundation stones of the Odeum of Herodes Atticus. It proved anything but a path of roses, and I doubt if it had caused wayfarers to perspire more profusely since the days when Athenian slaves groaned up and down it beneath the goads of masters whose hearts were as hard as the stone they quarried.

On a wide, grass-carpeted shelf, hewn in the mountain's breast, we took breath. For seats we had huge fragments of marble. To build what noble structure had the brother blocks been laboriously carried thence? and why these, chiseled and shaped, left behind?

Paulos produced candles, which he lighted. We were to explore the stalactite grotto; that is, we were to be given a taste of it. As we approached the mouth of the cave, the air of the under

world came forth and gave us a chilly greeting. Then we heard the tinkle of dripping water. From the clinging mould and moss of the rocks above, delicate fern-sprays depended. The floor of the cavern proved to be sloping and slippery. To manage one's feet and one's candle was an undertaking of no mean magnitude. If one looked admiringly up at a stalactite, it was at the risk of getting a large drop of water plump in the eye. We slid down to the end of the first passage and paused. Paulos doubled himself up, and was about to squeeze through a narrow and slimy fissure, when we informed him that our taste of the stalactite grotto had proven a feast, and he might reserve the remainder of it for his next Pentelicus party. From his sigh we feared he felt we did not appreciate his efforts in our behalf, but we were firm about leaving the cave. The sun-bath in which we then indulged was one of the keenest pleasures the mountain afforded.

By the time the muleteer with his charge had arrived, the ascent was re-

sumed. After climbing for half an hour over loose and crumbling fragments of rock, we caught sight of the summit. Paulos and the lagging members of the party were hidden by an intervening ridge. We consulted for an instant, and then, striking out almost at right angles from the pathway, away we went, scrambling, zigzagging, straining, panting, straight to the peak, where, on the windward side of a cairn, we cast ourselves upon the warm grass and looked. Ah! what a view it was!

On the east the mountain dropped almost sheer to the plain of Marathon, that spread its unobstructed sweep of emerald before us, fresh with the flowers of spring, and seemingly innocent of the blood of thousands slain. Like a great azure half-moon curved the bay, sailless, rippleless. Beyond a serpentine stretch of gulf, Eubœa lifted its crooked and craggy backbone. Away to the south, island after island dotted the golden main. We crept around the cairn, and faced the west and the wind to gaze upon those ranges which the muses love,—Cithæron, Helicon, and,

grandly towering above all, the white summits of Parnassus, the snow upon which seemed like an immaculate cloud-bank. Then we crept back again into the warmth and calm; and presently, when Paulos, our puffing companion, and the laden muleteer came leisurely up, we spread a lunch-cloth that vied with the covering on Parnassus. For the time being around that improvised board "Greek met Greek."

On our downward tramp, Paulos insisted upon leading the way, and what a pace he set! He seemed bent on having his revenge for the slip we had given him earlier in the day. Taking a different path from the one by which we had ascended, he hurried us across slopes that had been swept and charred by mountain fires, along the edge of precipitous gorges up which the wind roared an angry challenge, through stony bottoms washed bare of earth by torrents, swinging ever on ahead with a confident, never-ceasing stride. Did we demur? No! but when we descried the silvery poplars in which the monastery is bowered, it was with a thrill of

delight, and I doubt if ever the springs
of Helicon afforded sweeter draught to
poet than did the fountain of Pentelicus
to four foot-weary and thirsty mountain
climbers.

II.

A CORINTHIAN EXCURSION.

WHEN we left Eleusis the sun was still hidden, but suddenly, by some ærial magic, the clouds parted and began to disappear. Before we reached hill-set Megara and the ruined Byzantine castle near the sea there were only a few straggling drifts brooding above the horizon. From the mainland a path of silver stretched across the gulf to the island of Ægina. Reapers were harvesting the grain, although it was the fickle month of "storm and sun." Leaving behind the purple-flecked slopes of Cithæron, we crept along the face of a cliff above the sea. Below were fishing boats drifting languidly; above was the black green of dense fir boughs. Bold poppies waved from cleft and cranny. Soon, rising amethystine out of the clear distance, the mountains of the Peloponnesus came in sight, Acro-Corinthus a stalwart sentinel in the foreground.

Then we crossed the deep gap of the isthmian canal, and pulled into the Corinth station.

There was nothing to delay us in the straggling modern town, where scarcely a house possesses a second story, such is the prevailing dread of earthquakes. Nature, emulating the example of Roman, Goth, Venetian, and Turk, has been hard on Corinth. But, whatever advantages over her other Greek towns may boast, not one can surpass the jewel-like sapphire and the flawless curve of her bay.

Paulos was with us (how fitting that a Paul should be our guide at Corinth!) and bargained with true Greek shrewdness for a conveyance to carry us to the site of the ancient town. The road along the margin of the sea was hard and smooth, and we had a wide and unobstructed outlook. In the fields, as we turned upward from the shore, were traces of old tombs. Beneath a huge plane-tree, near a dirty inn that was a-swarm with children, we left our vehicle and struck out over dry and dusty stubble toward a depression where

green boughs were visible. The ground fell away precipitously, and we descended into the little glade by stone steps put in place when the gods of Olympus were worshiped in Corinth.

Here one of them — by repute Venus — had a shrine; and here, under the wild fig boughs, sung to by the voice of the spring, we passed the noontide, gazing down the tiny dale toward the sea, where the gulls swept in long curves, and the sun turned to silver the distant white-caps.

“Will the gentlemen have mules for the ascent of Acro-Corinthus?” asked the innkeeper of Paulos, as we paused at the squalid hostelry on our way to the seven Doric columns that stand as the sole memorials of the grandeur of the temples of Corinth.

“No,” we said decidedly. We who had scaled Pentelicus, take mules for Acro-Corinthus! The idea was absurd.

“The gentlemen make a great mistake,” ventured the innkeeper and translated Paulos; “the climb is a steep one. It will be very hot.”

Hot!—the audacity of the man! A

delightful breeze was blowing, crinkling the wheat, and whispering soft secrets to the leaves of the great plane-tree.

To negative once for all the mule proposition we unitedly raised our eyebrows—a most emphatic Greek “no”—but even this had small effect, and we



did not succeed in shaking off “mine host of the inn ” until we had promised to drink deeply of his lemonade when we returned from our climb. He had followed us almost to the site of the temple, and now we turned from the roadway and hurried through a strip of grain to the ruins.

The storms of many centuries have worn the fluted columns almost smooth, and the original hue of the stone can only be surmised. Some authorities

aver that Neptune was the divinity here worshiped, and the sea-sweep that the temple commands renders plausible such a conjecture. Doubtless of yore Ceres had no claim upon the spot, but to-day, were a contest between two Olympians possible, the goddess would have quite as strong a case as father Neptune, for at the harvest season wheat and barley billows encompass the ancient columns with their golden surge.

By a narrow footpath we began climbing Acro-Corinthus. Below us, as we ascended, we saw traces of a long disused roadway. Hyacinths and poppies starred even the steepest slopes. More abrupt grew the path, and the higher we went the more intense the heat became. Then we bethought us of the warning of the innkeeper, and could four mules have been produced by Greek necromancy they would have been hailed as a welcome acquisition to our party. But the worst of the climb was yet before us. We rounded a jut in the mountain and discovered that we must proceed by steep zigzags through a narrow gully into which the sun beat with full force,

and where not the least suspicion of a breeze stirred. Paulos, fearing perhaps that he might be taken to task for not warning us what to expect, pushed rapidly on ahead, for the rest of us, inured though we had been to Syrian heat, haste was impossible. At length a swerve in the fissure revealed the outer gateway of the acropolis, and gave us courage to persevere. After a moment's rest in the shade of a rock, whose exposed surface had the appearance of being burned to a blister, we made a final dash, scaled the bank of the moat, sprang into the dry ditch, and gained the shadow of the walls.

Acro-Corinthus is to-day deserted save by the lizards. These spry creatures, however, are as numerous as an army. Before we reached the interior of the citadel proper we passed beneath three dismantled archways. Once inside, there were heights still above us, crowned by the ruins of Turkish and Venetian fortifications. Against modern artillery the battlements of this imposing fortress would prove of small avail, yet they seem impregnable. Leaving

the highest point for our final survey, we threaded our way between fragments of fallen wall, keeping ever a watchful eye upon our path lest we should stumble into one of the three hundred and sixty-five wells, or reservoirs, which tradition assigns to the acropolis. Our objective point was the famed Pierian spring. On the northern slope, beneath the crown of Acro-Corinthus, where a temple to Venus once looked toward her birthplace, the sea, we found a dark opening in the earth. By a short wooden ladder we invaded the cavity, and, when our eyes had become accustomed to the dim light, saw steps of stone descending to the margin of a pool so clear that it was almost impossible to detect where air and water touched. A sturdy pillar and massive cross-piece upheld the impending weight of earth and rock. Bearing in mind Pope's injunction, we drank deeply, and a refreshing draught it was.

Amid the tall stalks of lilies that had passed their flowering-time, before the lintel of the shrine once sacred to the goddess of love, we stretched ourselves, frightening the lizards from their haunts,

giving heed only to the marvelous panorama that embraces so many of the most historic spots in Greece. Strabo, Livy, and Statius, among the ancients, looked from this self-same pinnacle, and gave in glowing words the scope and grandeur of the sight. Nor have moderns been sparing in their laudation. Poised, as it were, in mid-sky, we seemed to be upon a level with Cithæron, and quite to overtower distant Hymettus. The spreading horizon lines bounded a wide upper sea on which a few cloud-barques were sailing. The Corinthian and Saronic gulfs were so far below us that at the angle from which we viewed them they appeared like scraps of the great ether ocean above, misplaced by some mischance. The water around the shores of Salamis was opalescent, and in effect the island hung suspended in a silvery atmosphere.

When we descended from Acro-Corinthus, the sun no longer glowed fiery and scorching, and our downward tramp was a pleasant one. The innkeeper's beverage proved most delectable, and we sped back to modern Corinth and the

railway station in the face of a breeze
blowing fresh from the sea. That night
a red half-moon rose from behind a
rocky shoulder of Salamis, and we took
it as the sky's altar-flame to the memory
of Themistocles, the hero of the first
great naval battle of history.

*If I were to crave one boon,
Would the past but grant release
I would choose me an hour from an afternoon
In the golden air of Greece.*

*I would bask on the grassy crest
Of that memoried mountain-hill ;
Above, the blue with its infinite rest,
Anigh me the muses' rill.*

*And ever around and afar
Would the violet ridges rise,
Where the valleys were once oracular
With Olympian prophecies.*

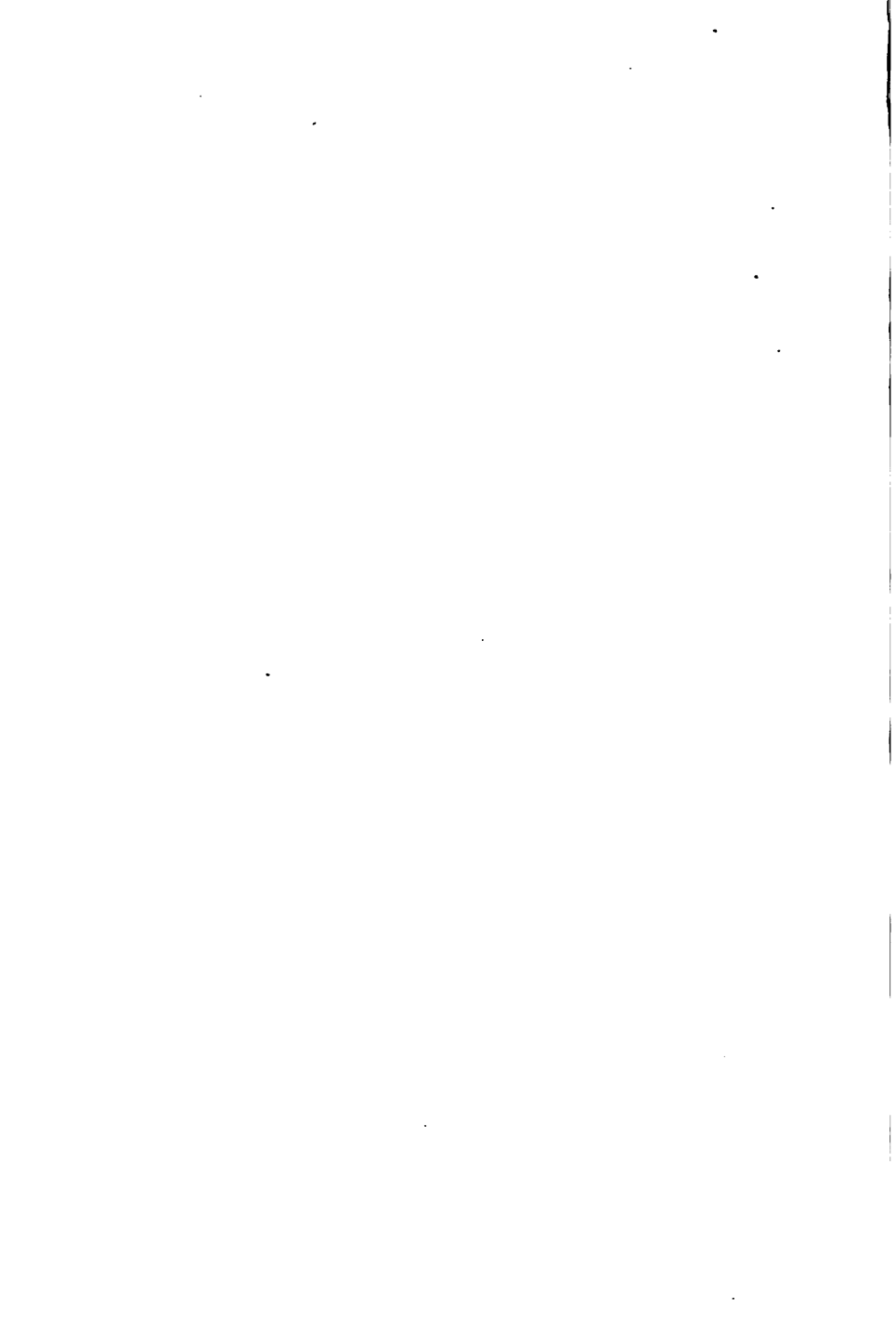
*And below the fortress-crown,
Whose warders the free winds be,
The grain would wave o'er the buried town
By the jewel sweep of the sea.*

*And away in the middle main,
A sapphire under sky,—
Like the purple links of a mighty chain
Would the poisèd islands lie.*

*I would joy in the eye-delight
As a lizard joys in the sun,
And the beauty would melt on my raptured sight
Till my soul and the scene were one.*

*So were I to crave one boon,
If the past would grant release
I would choose me an hour from an afternoon
In the golden air of Greece.*





Syrian Silhouettes.

SYRIAN SILHOUETTES.

I.

A RIDE TO THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

THE sun rose above the gray bulk of the Mount of Olives, and roused us with



shafts of gold, shot through our eastern windows. Over the roofs of the city we looked toward the glow of the morning. Faint from the tapering minaret of a mosque came a muezzin's matin cry. The unfinished Greek campanile on the

Mount seemed black against the brilliant background. For a moment we stood by the back-thrown casement, and drank in the pulse-quickenning mountain breeze. Beneath our unsubstantial balcony laden donkeys were already plodding by. We could not afford to be laggards, so down we rushed to breakfast. The less said about this meal at Hotel Feil, the better. We did not tarry long at table. Demetrius's shout was heard below; the snap of Demetrius's whip woke echoes in the hotel court-yard; the tramp of Demetrius's Syrian cavalry boots resounded upon the stairs; then the beaming face of the Greek appeared in the doorway.

"Ho, Sir Dragoman!" we cried: "we are ready."

It was a blithe start that we made, for our steeds were alert and spirited. The gray pranced, the bay pawed, the black sniffed the air. A Turkish soldier was yawning in his sentry-box; an Armenian café-keeper was just bestirring himself; the flag over the Austrian embassy flung bravely out upon the breeze; and there was the suspicion of life near the Jaffa

Gate. The first leper had taken his position, and held out to us his tin cup for alms, as we descended toward the Valley of Hinnom. On our left loomed Mount Zion, its gleaming domes showing above the massive walls. Soon we bade farewell to the vale of grewsome traditions, associated so darkly with the shrine of Moloch, and saw the white, smooth Bethlehem highway uncoiling its sinuous length before us. Upon the plain we were about to cross a forest once waved, but it was long since destroyed by the devastating Turk.

The Valley of Roses was upon our right, where in summer the air is heavy with a fragrance as sweet as that which pervades the gardens of Damascus. Further on, in the same direction, was a ruin marking the site of the house of Simeon. Directly in our pathway was the well of the Magi, where those seers are reputed to have beheld the guiding star.

At the so-called tomb of Rachel, an unpretentious monument by the way-side, we paused for a moment, and then hastened on to Bethlehem, and the well

that is before its gate. Here, where David sent the three strong men for water while he was hiding in the Cave of Adullam, we had a fine view of the field of Boaz far below, bathed in the warm sunlight of the morning. We clattered through the gateway, and into the great square before the Church of the Nativity, but did not dismount.

Had we not before been beguiled into sundry shops by the importunate mother-of-pearl venders? Had we not been surrounded and pestered by beggars no words in our vocabulary could drive away? With these nuisances we could deal better on horseback, and firm in our saddles we remained while our dragoman went in pursuit of a guide. True, we had a longing to enter the cool, stately aisles of the church, and to stand again in the little chapel, amid the ever-burning lamps and undying odor of incense, where shines from the marble pavement the silver star, with the Latin inscription: "Here of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ was born."

But we knew the delays that would ensue if we put foot upon the ground,

and were resolute. Boys rolled over and over in the dust and scrambled for the copper coins we tossed to them. The Bethlehem women, with rows of gold and silver pieces hanging in loops from their head-dresses, exhausted their curiosity, and went their way. At last our patience was rewarded, and we saw our dragoman's beaming face again. And what a companion he brought with him! A man in the prime of life, swarthy, sinewy, with keen, sparkling eyes, and teeth that shone like the Bethlehem mother-of-pearl when he made us his Eastern salutation. A black kaffeyeh adorned his head and flowed down his back, and from neck to toe he was clad in a robe which probably had once been white, but was now gray. His belt was an arsenal in miniature, and he carried a long-barreled Bedouin gun over his shoulder. We immediately had a feeling of safety. With such a guardian we were sure no robbers would dare to attack us.

Southward into the heart of a rocky wilderness our guide led the way. None but Syrian horses could be trusted upon the precarious path we were obliged to

traverse. Often we were forced to dismount, and scramble up or down, leading our steeds by the bridle.

There was something deeply impressive in the desolation and solitude. Nowhere in all Palestine is the adventurous wanderer more awed than in this wild and unfrequented region. Spears of brown grass showed in dry depressions; there were cactus clumps in clefts; and now and then a bold anemone lifted its crimson cup to the un pitying blue of the sky, as if in defiance. On distant hilltops were inclosed patches of rock, which, we were told, were long disused threshing-floors.

*Where is the morning brighter,
Where is the air more bland,
Where do the stars glow whiter,
Than over this lonely land?
Slopes that are brown and barren
Scarce show a spear-green sod,
But wait for another Aaron,
And the blow of his quickening rod.*

*Never a wild voice quavers,
Never a song-bird trills;
Only the warm light wavers
Over the desolate hills.*

*Plodding, the pilgrim passes ;
Patient, the shepherds go,
Seeking the tender grasses
Far in the vales below.*

*Shade there is nowhere showing
Wide as the eye can sweep ;
Founts there are nowhere flowing
Down from the rocky steep.
Only the vulture veering
High like a wind-blown weft,
Only the poppy peering
Out from the ragged cleft.*

*Once there were orchards teeming,
Once there were pastures fair,
Once there were vineyards gleaming
Green in the golden air.
Now there is desolation ;
Then there was bounty ; then
Flourished a haughty nation
Strong with its million men.*

*How is its prowess shattered !
Dust are its priests and kings ;
The sons of its sons are scattered
Like seeds on the swift wind's wings.
Their door is a whole world's scorning ;
Yet where is the soul but thrills
Beholding the light of morning
On the broad Judæan hills !*

We zigzagged into a barren valley, and began climbing the opposite slope. At the height of four hundred feet we paused. Before us was a narrow chasm to be crossed, and then we should be at the entrance to the cave. Our dragoman set us a courageous example, and we followed him like boys at leap-frog, clearing the yawning crevasse at a bound.

We were now upon a square platform directly in front of the cavern's mouth. We divested ourselves of our hats and coats, lighted our candles, fastened one end of a ball of stout twine securely to a cragged projection, and were prepared for exploration. Our guide squatted, gun in hand, at a spot that commanded the widest view. He was to discharge his gun in case of danger from robbers, and thus summon us from our subterranean wanderings. The savage Bedouins of the southern wilderness have been known to pounce upon unwary travelers here, and we had no desire to be caught napping by these Arab highwaymen.

The cavern now called the Cave of Adullam may not be the refuge in which

David concealed himself, when hunted by Saul, but there are good reasons to suppose that it is. Certainly, it is upon the way to Engedi, and is so situated that a few there intrenched could withstand an army. It is to be hoped, however, that in the days of David the cavern was somewhat easier of access than now. We not only had to crawl upon our hands and knees, but to wriggle along like snakes, before we stood in the first of the three large chambers of white limestone.

We delved in the mass of accumulated rubbish upon the floor, and discovered many fragments of earthen vessels. From these shards each of us selected a choice specimen, in the fond thought that David *might* once have drunk from the unbroken jars.

Fresh air and bright sunlight were welcome after our under-earth excursion. Our guide sat sphinx-like at his post, when we emerged from the cavern. A vulture soaring above, a blot upon the blue, was the only sign of life in the great billowy expanse of hill and mountain that met our eyes.

Near by, upon a small grassy plateau, our lunch was spread beneath the shade of an overhanging rock where a tiny spring trickled down. Here were delicate ferns, and a few pale blue blossoms. This seemed to be the only oasis in all that vast wilderness.

II.

A VISIT TO MAR-SABA.

HIGH noon over Jerusalem ! A glaring sun in a sky of burnt-out blue; a hot breeze stirring the drooping leaves of the olives; and every one, save beggars and travelers, a-drowse. Though we made no audible murmur, there was much inward demur as we mounted our horses in the steaming open space upon which the hotel looked. Demetrius, our dragoman, smilingly adjusted his kaffeyeh. No heat, however fiery, could disturb his good nature. He was imperturbable save when a muleteer proved fractious; then his anger spurted in explosive jets like a Roman candle.

We were soon riding down the Valley of Hinnom, past the Pool of Siloam, and the vegetable gardens from which the "holy city" is supplied. We glanced back for a moment at the frowning walls of Zion, then plunged boldly into the Judean wilderness. The afternoon

seemed interminable. The bridle-paths were steep and stony, and the heat so intense that we did not dare to hasten our horses. Most of the time we were traversing parched slopes where dry spears of coarse, stunted grass bristled like porcupine quills. When we were able to ride in the shadow of impending rock-walls, the cool air was more to us than all the balm of Gilead.

Late in the afternoon we found our camp pitched in a grassy hollow, flanked by barren hills, and sentineled in front by a cone-shaped, precipitous, whitish-gray mountain peak. Muleteers and camp-servants had left Jerusalem at mid-morning, so that our tents were in order, and tea awaiting us on our arrival. We had a merry race for the dining-tent, but could not tarry long over "the fragrant herb of China," since there is no "open sesame" for the gates of Mar-Saba after dusk has fallen. Greatly refreshed, we remounted, and now, as we climbed a rock-cut bridle-path that wound up one side of the Kedron gorge, the rays of the westering sun beat only upon the cliffs opposite, and we could ride bare-

browed if we desired. Not a growing thing clung to the seamed, reddish-brown faces of the chasm. Not a living creature, beast or bird, was anywhere visible. The desolation was oppressive. The hoofs of our horses awoke weird echoes that sounded like the mocking laughter of the fiends of fable. Higher and higher we crept, until the dry bed of the stream lay sheer six hundred feet below. Then a sudden turn revealed to us the monastery watch-tower, close at hand. We dismounted in a roughly-paved space, and pulled violently at a rope that rang a cracked bell above the gateway. There was a clatter of footsteps upon the stairs of stone, fastenings were removed, and a frowzy monk bade us welcome. We descended fifty steps or more, and found ourselves in the monastery court-yard. In a few moments a second monk, quite as unkempt as the first, came to show us the places of interest.

We first viewed the empty tomb of St. Sabas (the bones of the saint repose in Venice), whither bands of pilgrims yearly resort, when on their way to the

Dead Sea and the Jordan. The sepulcher of this worthy man stands within a domed chapel that is decorated in gaudy Byzantine style. Sabas, although the monastery takes its name from him, was not the first hermit to retire to this desolate spot for religious meditation. A certain Euthymius seems to have been the monkish pioneer. Sabas was his pupil, and rose to such eminence in the church that he had not only this monastery, but also a holy order, named for him. Perhaps it was the loneliness of the place, the well-nigh unbroken solitude, that attracted these early ascetics. The construction of their retreat, though the present walls are of a much later date than the sixth century, must have been a Herculean task. Flying buttresses had to be thrown out from a point near the bottom of the gorge, for the cliff did not afford secure foundation. The monastery is built in a series of terraces, the lowest overhanging the gulf, hundreds of feet above where the Kedron, in the rainy season, dashes tempestuously down to the Dead Sea. Each terrace has its tiny garden where figs



ripen very early, and in one plot a solitary palm was growing. This tree, we were told, was planted by St. Sabas, and our guide solemnly affirmed that the dates it bore were stoneless.

We endeavored to interest ourselves in the tomb of Chrysorrhoeas, a Greek theologian of the eighth century; but we judged that our enthusiasm did not satisfy our guide, for he hurried us on to the Chapel of St. Nicholas, a grotto in the cliff side, where, behind a massive iron grating, we beheld the bones of the anchorites who were slain by the troops of a mediæval Persian invader. As we made no immediate comment upon this ghastly brotherhood of the dead, it is to be presumed that our conductor concluded that we were smitten with awe, and felt that his labors had not been in vain.

The Cave of St. Sabas was reserved until the last, to make a vivid and stirring impression. We reached this cavern by a narrow passage-way in the rock. It proved to be a small, irregular chamber, connected by a low doorway with a second and more diminutive room. Here,

it is said, the pious anchorite dwelt; and here, popular tradition relates, returning one day from meditation in the wilderness, or from converse with his recluse brethren, he found a lion in possession. Nothing daunted by the presence of so formidable an uninvited guest, the saint knelt in the accustomed place, and began his prayers. The lion, having decided views upon the subject of politeness, dragged Father Sabas out of the cave by way of mild remonstrance for his lack of courtesy. Whereat, recollecting himself, the kind-hearted man assigned the lion a corner; and, like the young people in the fairy-tale, the two lived happily ever afterward.

The monks of Mar-Saba have, from time immemorial, housed pilgrims and travelers. We did not regret that we could not enjoy their hospitality, but we were sorry to leave without seeing them feed the jackals. These creatures occupy the deserted grottoes in the cliffs that were once the abodes of the hermits, and, at the stroke of a certain monastery bell, assemble to enjoy the bounty of the monks.

The sudden darkness of the Orient overtook us just before we reached our camp; and, when we looked back from our cheery tent-inclosure, the entrance to the gorge of Kedron yawned as black as the fabled "realm of Chaos and old Night." The jackals had begun their clamor, and the constellations were wheeling across the sky.

III.

OVER HERMON.

BENEATH the giant sycamore by the hill of Dan, we made our noonday halt. The horses were hobbled, carpets unrolled, and luncheon spread. A few feet distant, one of the branches of the "little Jordan" ran, singing musically, toward the plain. Oleander and poplar thickets encompassed us, and the air was redolent with an unknown perfume. After our repast, Demetrius beguiled the leisure hour with reminiscences of a journey with the Mecca caravan; then we braved the heat, and climbed the mound on which once stood the northernmost town of the Israelites.

Of this "city of old time," no memorial remains, but above its grass-grown dust rises the tomb-shrine of a Moslem saint. The votive offerings of passing devotees dangled from the boughs of an oak near the crumbling cenotaph. Below us, on the west, girdled by its reedy marshes,

burned the waters of Merom. Above, on the east, "the mountain of the aged," "the white-haired," the majestic "snow-mountain," Hermon, lifted a gleaming crown.

Up stony slopes, through thorny groves, we rode at mid-afternoon to Banias. Herod's son, Philip the Tetrarch, called this town Cæsarea Philippi, but its old name, derived from the great god Pan, still clung to it, and survives in corrupted form. We found our camp pitched upon a grassy plateau near which the stream from the Jordan's source, and the birds in the ancient olive-trees, joined in tuneful symphony. Six hundred feet above the town, capping the summit of a rugged spur, loomed the huge castle of Subebbeh, one of the most impregnable Syrian fortresses in the days when the followers of Jerusalem's Christian kings set lance in rest and charged the ranks of Islam. The bristling brown bastions invited exploration, but we heeded the warning of the sinking sun; the most ambitious climber among us had no desire to pass the night with the jackals.



We made a pilgrimage instead to the source of the Jordan. By the side of the crystal watercourse,—for the Jordan, however turbid where it cuts the plains of Jericho, is here as clear as flawless diamond,—and through clusters of silvery poplars, we wended our way to the base of the great “snow-mountain.”

For many a century, masses of rock have, from time to time, been detached from the face of the cliff, until the mouth of the wide cavern, whence the water gushes, has been well-nigh blocked. This spot was the holy of holies to the early pagan worshipers of Pan, and niches are still to be seen in the scarred and seamed mountain wall, where the image of the deity was adorned with votive wreaths. In the gathering twilight of distant pastoral days, suppliants brought the modest flowers of the field, and offered them with simple, trustful prayers. Later, the marble Panium was built, and the priests, with repeated invocations, hung sprinkled rose-garlands upon carven altars, and set about, in delicate vases, clusters of the wine-dark, velvet lily. Herod's beautiful temple to C.

Augustus replaced the shrine of the river-god. The conquering crusaders here bowed the knee to the Christ, and when driven homeward across the sea, revered in memory the birthplace of the sacred river, while the zealous Moslem linked a paynim name with the mountain well-spring. To-day pilgrims muse upon the spot, and Time, slowly slipping the sand through the glass of the years, prepares another change,—it may be the return of the Jew.

Over stone walls we clambered, from which fragments of lintel, column, and capital protruded; through olive orchards we wandered, where each tree was a patriarch, “hoary with eld.” Squalor has its home in Banias, and every habitation is a hovel, though a second story of interwoven boughs gives to some of the huts an appearance of comparative comfort. In these half-open, breezy rooms the natives pass the midday hours of the sweltering summer.

We left the town by its only remaining gateway, a relic of Roman occupation, and suddenly there broke upon our sight one of the most picturesque scenes

in Syria. We stood upon a massive bridge, spanning a mountain torrent. The stones beneath our feet were worn with the tread of all the generations since the Cæsars. Beyond the stream, the pathway over Hermon wound up a



barren slope. On the town side, the old citadel wall rose sheer from the edge of the gorge. Not far above, the huge buttresses of an ancient mill parted the rushing water; the superstructure was moss-grown and toppling. Below the bridge the descent was sharper. Here, arborescent undergrowth half concealed the foaming rapids. The keystone of the

gateway — a most graceful arch — had parted, and hung in menace over every passer. The chisel of an Arab artisan once traced above the entrance an inscription, but he carved upon perishable rock, and only a baffling blur of his thought remains as epitaph over the Banias that was.

Behind the black ramparts of the deserted fortress of Subebbeh, that evening, the moon showed her richest silver, and night long the jackals barked.

On the following morning, shortly after the crowing of the first Banias cock, we were in the saddle. The eastern slopes were golden with the sunrise, but in our sheltered vale the gray mists of dawn still lingered. A few natives had risen to watch our departure, and made a picturesque group in the old gateway as we turned for a final look at the town. We wound upward through a green valley, gaining fine receding views of the Merom basin, with the castle of the Crusaders in bold relief in the foreground. The bridle path over Hermon is something to remember as an aggregation of more stones than any

other traveled highway can show. Never had mountain torrent a rougher road to travel than our faithful steeds, but breezes born above the snow line, constantly refreshed us.

Mejdel-esh-shems, a Druse village, was left behind, and, after a sharp ascent, we paused upon the broken and sterile surface of a volcanic plateau, while four thousand feet further skyward towered the main peak of the mountain. At the point where the descent began, our gaze swept over a vast purple plain. A white dot in that undulating, hazy expanse, marked our goal, — Damascus.

From that hour a spirit of elation filled us. Leading our horses, we scrambled downward for an hour uncomplainingly, over the rough lava, and halted for the noontide rest in a hot gully. But what mattered the heat when we could give ourselves up to visions of the rose-gardens of Damascus? Our hearts' desire could not be reached that night, yet we were patient, knowing what the morrow held in store. At Kerf Hawar, on which looks down from a bare gray hill, the reputed tomb of Nimrod, we

camped contentedly among the poplars,
by the most Arcadian of brooks. Soon
the rose-glow deepened on the crown of
the "snow-mountain," and the outline of
the tomb grew black against the fading
sky; then came the swift night of the
Orient, with its attendant host of stars.

IV.

A DAMASCUS GARDEN.



HAVE you never, O dweller beside
the home ingle, in visions by
night or in dreams
by day, trod those
enchanted gar-
dens that the
Prophet refused

to tread, or
quaffed from
those well-
springs whose
waters are
"better than
all the waters
of Israel"?

It is possible
that fancy has
been so un-
friendly?
Come, then,

let me be your guide for an hour, and
your pleasure shall be my sole meed!

The outlines of Anti-Lebanon are beginning to darken, for the sun is westering. It is twilight in the bazars. Only a slant ray here and there finds an entrance, and sets a bevy of motes dancing. The crooked, uncovered highways are cooling, so we shall not need our kaffe-yehs. I shall not take you by the great "Street called Straight" where the merchants and their customers are still chaffering, but by more devious ways—under the massive walls of the old castle and past the doorway of the great mosque. Here we will pause long enough to watch the ingoing and outgoing stream, and to peer into the wide court whence the lofty pillared aiseways open. In the quietude and shadow of these aisles do the devout bow Mecca-ward, and here, after their prayers are said, stretched upon the soft webs of precious looms, do they enjoy an undisturbed siesta.

We shall pass the saddlers' booths with their fascinating trappings, and be beguiled perhaps by some glib-tongued curio-vender to look at his tempting stores, among which you will find the

Damascus blade of your heart's desire
and possess it after infinite haggling.

As we approach the gateway of St. Thomas, we are among the dwellings of the Christians. The imagination must picture the interiors, and the bare, brown walls upon either side of the highway offer room for the most varied conjectures. Doubtless the gateway by which we are leaving the city has been the witness of many a bloody tragedy, for the history of Damascus has not a few crimson pages. The archway seems nearing decrepitude; evidently the accumulated weight of years threatens its downfall. Houses look from the crest of the girdle of ramparts, and every window has its shielding lattice.

Now are we within sound of a murmur of many waters. It is the Barada. Could river have name more musically appropriate? "Golden Stream," the Greeks called it, but that was in an age when all things were idealized. To-day it is the most unclouded crystal. Should we follow its windings through apricot and citron and pomegranate orchards, and rough, rock-strewn mountain gorges,



far into the heart of Anti-Lebanon, we should come upon its chief source in a grove of silver poplars. Strong and full and clear it gushes from some subterranean reservoir, and here, scattered in chaotic confusion, are huge fragments of a temple where the river-god was worshiped in the old pagan days. Small wonder is it that the Damascenes reared a shrine to their deific benefactor, for without the Barada Damascus could not be, would never have been.

There is no throng in this garden upon the banks of the Barada whither I have led you, but here and there beneath the walnut and poplar trees are little groups who are watching the afternoon wane, sipping their sherbet, smoking their nargilehs, and listening to the strains of a high Arab air sung by four male voices to the accompaniment of a zither, a viol, and two Syrian guitars. The women are most of them unveiled, for this bower is not the favorite haunt of Moslems. The men affect jaunty jackets, cross-embroidered with gold braid. The singing and playing cease; the musicians descend from their pavil-

ion; soft laughter rises from the groups of women with whom the men do not mingle; a breeze that presages evening stirs the topmost boughs. Where could we have found a more idyllic spot, a more restful closing for the day!

And now comes a lithe young Syrian, on whose cheeks there is the tinge of the Damascus rose. "Sherbet!" he cries. "What flavor will the howadji choose? Shall it be violet, or citron, or pistachio, or pomegranate? and shall water-pipes be brought?" Our commands are given, and before us are set tall glasses sparkling with a draught hued like the juice drawn from the pomegranate's heart. For us are these ruby "beaded bubbles winking at the brim," for us a nectar vying with that "the faithful" quaff in Paradise. A living coal loosens the prisoned soul of fragrance in the latakia, and what enchantments we straightway taste! Veiled sultanas shape themselves from the clouds we blow, and genii as marvelous of form as the one released from the copper vessel by the fisherman in the old Arabian tale.

We turn from our smoke fantasies to

watch a Palmyra caravan trail its weary length toward St. Thomas's Gate, the horses fagged and drooping, the camels swinging by with patient, unvarying stride. The red light of the low sun flashes its parting salute through the branches. Our single bead upon the rosary of time is well-nigh told. Our fellow loiterers are beginning to disperse. Through an opening in the leaves we watch the minarets, and lean forward to catch the nearest muezzin's call. We will wait until we hear it, and shall we not linger, too, until the shadows lure forth the nightingale, and the evening star inspires the impassioned bird to song? That shall be the signal for our departure; and hark! it rises, a divine, spirit-thrilling melody.

*On the crimson edge of the eve,
By the Barada's flute-like flow,
When the shadow shuttles began to weave,
And the mountain airs to blow,
With the sight of the night's first star,
As though it were dumb too long,
There burst on the ear a wondrous bar
From a spirit dowered with song.*

*And swift it swelled to a strain
That rippled and rose and ran
Through every chord of joy or pain
That throbs in the heart of man ;
It told of love lightening life,
And of sorrow's bitter breath,
It pealed a psalm of peace from strife
And of triumph over death.*

*And I knew it for God's own bird,
A prophet voice in the dark ;
The budding stars in the heavens heard,
For they could not choose but hark.
Then the worn earth hid its face,
And dreamed its dream of the dawn ;
The voice of man was stilled for a space,
But the bird sang on and on.*

